

BYZANTINE  
AND MODERN  
GREEK  
STUDIES

9

984-8

# Contents

Editorial comment

## ARTICLES:

Folklore: an Obituary? 1  
MARGARET ALEXIOU

Myth and Text: Readings in the Modern Greek Novel 29  
RODERICK BEATON

Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Conceptions of Gender 55  
CATIA GALATARIOU

'Jargon' vs. 'the Facts'? Byzantine History-Writing and Contemporary Debates 95  
JOHN HALDON

Ethnic Identity and Patriotic Idealism in the Writings of General Makriyannis 133  
DAVID HOLTON

The Politics of Criticism: Deconstruction, Kazantzakis, 'Literature' 161  
GREGORY JUSDANIS

Time Out of Mind: the Relationship between Story and Narrative in Solomos' 'The Cretans' 187  
PETER MACKRIDGE

## SHORT NOTES:

The Treatment of Byzantine Place-Names 209  
ANTHONY BRYER

Dream Interpretation: a Byzantinist Superstition? 215  
GEORGE CALOFONOS



On Fifteenth-Century CryptoChristianity: a Letter of  
Michael Apostolis to George Amoiroutzes  
ANNA FRANGEDAKI

221

CRITICAL STUDIES:

Encountering the Epistemological Challenge or Beyond  
Humanism: Contemporary Greek Criticism and the Language of  
Theory  
VASSILIS LAMBROPOULOS

225

Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies  
© Centre for Byzantine Studies and Modern Greek, University of  
Birmingham

ISSN 0307-0131

## List of Abbreviations

AASS	<i>Acta Sanctorum</i>
AB	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
ABSA	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
AHR	<i>American Historical Review</i>
B	<i>Byzantion</i>
BF	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i>
BHG	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca</i>
BMGS	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
BNJ	<i>Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher</i>
BS	<i>Byzantinoslavica</i>
BZ	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
CFHB	<i>Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae</i>
CSCO	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</i>
CSHB	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae (Bonn)</i>
DHGE	<i>Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique</i>
DIEE	<i>Δελτίον της Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας της Ἑλλάδος</i>
DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
DTC	<i>Dictionnaire de théologie catholique</i>
EEBS	<i>Ἐπετηρίς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν</i>
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
EO	<i>Échos d'Orient</i>
GRBS	<i>Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
IRAIK	<i>Izvestija Russkago Arkheologičeskago Instituta v Konstantinopole</i>
JA	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
JGR	<i>J. &amp; P. Zepos, Jus Graecoromanum</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
JÖB	<i>Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
JÖBG	<i>Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft</i>
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>

MPG	J.P. Migne, <i>Patrologia series Graeco-Latina</i>
MPL	J.P. Migne, <i>Patrologia series Latina</i>
OCP	<i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i>
PO	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i>
RE	<i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Pauly-Wissowa)
REB	<i>Revue des Études Byzantines</i>
REG	<i>Revue des Études Grecques</i>
ROC	<i>Revue de l'Orient Chrétien</i>
VV	<i>Vizantijskij Vremennik</i>
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
ZRVI	<i>Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta</i>

## Editorial Comment

This volume of *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* marks a break with the traditional format of the journal. After eight volumes which have presented a wealth of contributions to the field, the composition of the journal will change to cater for a wider variety of material: henceforth both longer articles and miscellaneous short notes, as well as a section of critical studies intended to take up current issues of theoretical and methodological interest, will be included, preceded also by a short editorial comment.

This change in presentation is the result chiefly of two considerations: the relatively limited space available in journals devoted to either or both of the main areas of study covered by *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* for short comments, the presentation of limited but valuable discussion of particular points — whether philological, historical or technical — not of article length; and the lack of any real debate, certainly within the various areas encompassed by 'Byzantine Studies', but also in the field of modern Greek history and literary studies, of fundamental theoretical issues which have become so important, and have been discussed to such advantage, within other fields of study in history, archaeology, cultural studies and modern literary theory. This is not to say that such issues have not been raised, nor that no-one is interested in such matters. Neither is it to insist that theoretical debates are of necessity either more interesting or more important than other aspects of scholarly work. But it is to note the significant absence in the fields dealt with here of any questioning of principles and methods, of any dialogue between modes of thinking and ways of approaching problems. And it is the encouragement both of such debate as well as of the work traditionally associated with this journal that the editorial board hopes to promote in future issues.

The potential range of such discussion is, of course, very wide, and the journal cannot hope to deal comprehensively with all the problems that might be seen as relevant by potential contributors. Neither is *BMGS* necessarily the right place for work which deals exclusively with problems of a general theoretical nature, relevant to our fields but not necessarily addressing the specific problems encountered within them. There exists already a variety



of journals which provide a suitable forum. On the other hand, many of the recent or current debates in the fields of history or literature will be of interest to readers of *BMGS*; and so space will be devoted to elucidating the nature of such debates, the problems they deal with, and their relevance to Byzantine and modern Greek studies. This volume introduces a number of such themes which we hope will promote interest in current debates by situating them within a wider context and by making them more accessible. We hope that they will at least suggest some approaches to common problems and promote further discussion.

## Folklore: An Obituary?

MARGARET ALEXIOU

"As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end" (M. FOUCAULT).

With the minor substitution of 'folk' for 'man', Foucault's comment on the discipline of anthropology, which concludes his *Order of Things* (1970: 387), provides an appropriate starting-point for a reappraisal of the present state and future prospects of Greek folklore studies. Kyriakidou-Nestoros (1978) and Herzfeld (1982) have already charted, from different perspectives, the major developments since the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is the intention of this paper to raise a series of questions relevant to folklore as an academic discipline in order to clarify some of the central issues, both theoretical and practical. First, what is folklore, and who are the folk? Why has it occupied such a prominent place in both the intellectual life and the educational system of Greece? Second, what factors have shaped its direction? Which features does Greek folklore share with European folklore, and which are peculiar? Third, what role can it play during the last decades of the twentieth century, when the very foundation of traditional life — the village community — is being rapidly eroded by the process of urbanisation and by the mechanisation of agriculture? Will it cease to exist except as an

\* This paper was originally given in shorter form to the Fourth Symposium of Poetry in Patras (July 1984), in Greek. I am grateful to participants in the discussion for valuable contributions. In particular I would like to thank Michael Herzfeld, Vassilis Lambropoulos, Marianna Spanaki and Dimitris Tziogas for suggestions and corrections.

antiquarian pastime, just as in the many centuries prior to its 'invention'? And finally, how can the relationship between 'folk' and 'art' culture be defined in the present Greek context? How can folklore be related to other disciplines, such as mythology, anthropology, literary history and criticism, history and sociology?

These questions have no easy answers. Yet they need to be raised if some advance is to be made from the present deadlock, with some folklorists pursuing various traditional paths, while others consider the theory of folklore with minimal reference to folk texts, excluding theoretical approaches which might threaten the existence of folklore on the grounds that 'foreign theories' cannot be applied systematically in the absence of theoretical debate in Greece at earlier stages. The present trend of post-structuralist studies, to analyse the changing functions and relations in and between academic disciplines, may not be welcome in all circles; yet at least it has succeeded in denting the complacency of traditional assumptions that the subjects we study and profess are objective fields of research in which our own part needs no analysis.<sup>1</sup> Attempts are currently being made — not without resistance — to initiate a challenge in the domain of Greek literary history and criticism. The fact that Greek folklore has, with important exceptions,<sup>2</sup> remained largely untouched by structuralist — let alone post-structuralist — approaches may render the present task more complex, but scarcely less urgent, not least because the 'live' material to be studied is rapidly changing.

My paper, intended as no more than a preliminary survey, will be illustrated throughout with examples drawn from fieldwork,

1. For the impact of post-structuralist approaches on other disciplines, such as philosophy, linguistics, literature and history, see Rorty (1978: 141-60, 1980), Derrida (1974, 1978), Harari (1979), White (1978) and Foucault (1970, 1972). While anthropology has received considerable critical attention in recent years, for example from Geertz (1973), Sperber (1975) and Leach (1982), folklore has been virtually ignored, but see Stewart (1978) and Propp (1984).

2. Structuralist approaches to Greek folklore include Kapsomenos (1978, 1979), Beaton (1980), Herzfeld (1977), Danforth (1982) and Alexiou (1983). Their applicability to Greek material is discussed, with reservations, by Merkalis (1973: 12-13), Kyriakidou-Nestoros (1978: 167-8) and Saunier (1983: 12-14). The contribution of structuralism to folklore outside Greece is assessed by Maranda and Maranda (1971) and Dundes (1978: 22-37, 178-299). Ancient Greek mythology has also received weighty attention in this respect, see Kirk (1970: 194-206), Friedrich (1978), Burkert (1979), Gordon (ed. 1980), and the perceptive analyses of Detienne (1977, 1979 and 1981).

texts and studies: theoretical reappraisal is not necessarily incompatible with practical demonstration.

### What is folklore?

Folklore, as an academic discipline, does not exist outside the conceptual framework of western scholarship over the past two centuries. Offspring of literary romanticism and the search for national consciousness in Europe, particularly in Germany during the last decades of the eighteenth century (Wilson 1973: 819-35), it developed in Greece out of the need to establish a sense of identity within Europe, especially after the foundation of the new state in 1834. The onslaughts of Jakob Fallmerayer (1830 and 1845) on the ethnic purity of the modern Greeks were among the significant factors shaping the concept of continuity (*synecheia*) in Greek culture from antiquity to the present day (Herzfeld 1982: 75-81). Both the theoretical basis and the practical applicability of this concept have been challenged and seriously undermined in recent studies,<sup>3</sup> leaving a conspicuous gap in the aims and pursuits of Greek folklore: if the quest for ancient elements and the search for origins and means of transmission — fundamental pursuits during the formative stages of collection and classification of material — are to be abandoned, how are the limits of the discipline to be re-defined? Recent attempts to answer the dilemma point in the direction of anthropology and sociology.<sup>4</sup> But do they offer a solution?

At this point a brief review, necessarily schematic, of Greek folklore in relation to European folklore more generally might prove instructive, more particularly since the latter tends to ignore the former (Cocchiara 1952), while the former refers to the latter only insofar as it impinges on Greek material. For this reason, select examples from British folklore studies would seem most apt, being more familiar to English readers and at the same time independent of Greek developments in a way in which German or French studies cannot claim to be.<sup>5</sup> It is not, after all,

3. For a succinct summary of the situation, see Danforth (1984).

4. See Hirschon (1983) and Danforth (1984).

5. For interaction between French, German and Greek folklore studies since the late eighteenth century, see Kyriakidou-Nestoros (1978: 23-34, 69-76, 92, 142-7) and Herzfeld (1982: 12, 29, 54, 75-90).

difficult for the western academic to detect the romantic ethnocentrism inherent in Greek *laographia*; it is less easy to determine precisely our own role in the game, past and present.

Whatever the present vicissitudes of folklore, the material basis for its study has always existed. In Greek, fragments of the popular songs of urban and rural folk have been recorded throughout the long history of its written tradition, whether buried in the interstices of historiography, chronography or cosmography, anecdotally personalised in the marginalia of biography or written reminiscences of high-style after-dinner talk, casually inserted into scholia on ancient texts, or even scribbled on the *verso* of manuscripts by Athonite and expatriate monks in idle and nostalgic mood.<sup>6</sup> Local customs, traditions and rituals have likewise been recorded, described and commented upon by historians, travellers, diplomats and church fathers from antiquity to the present day, testifying to a continuing tradition of scholarly and incidental zeal in recording items of information relevant to 'popular culture'.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, popular motifs and traditional techniques have always/already been present in Greek poetry, from Homer to Elytis. So what is new about 'folklore'?

The collection and anthologising of 'popular reliques' or 'antiquaries', as they were first known, began for their own sake (as distinct from incidental detail in a different kind of narrative) in sixteenth-century western Europe. In Denmark, interest in folk ballads has continued uninterrupted since 1591, when Vedel by royal decree had a full collection published (Wells 1950: 255). In England, at the interstices of orality and literacy during the twelfth century, ballads were used by chronographers as records for events and figures not mentioned in written sources, although not without some deprecation. Thus, Geoffrey of Monmouth defends his inclusion of popular ditties in his *Historia Regum Britannie* (ed. Jones 1929:1) with the words 'cum et gesta earum digna aeternitate laudis constarent et a multis populis quasi

6. Examples from antiquity to the late middle ages include the works of Herodotos, Diodoros of Sicily, Plutarch, Athenaios, Anna Comnena, Eustathios of Thessaloniki, Triclinius, and Neophytos Enkleistos. For fragments of songs in monastic manuscripts, see Bouvier (1960).

7. Much useful information, not yet systematically studied, can be found in the works of Liutprand of Cremona (ed. Bekker 1915), Buondelmonti (ed. Legrand 1897), Tournefort (English ed. 1718), Pouqueville (1820) and Pashley (1837).

inscripta iocunde et memoriter praedicerentur'; while William of Malmesbury notes 'Et haec quidem fide integra de rege conscripsi; sequentia magis cantilenis per successiones temporum detritis, quan libris ad instructiones posterum (*sic*) elucubratis, didicerim . . . Quae ideo apposui, non ut earum veritatem defendam, sed ne lectorum scientiam defraudam' (ed. Hardy 1840: 221-2).<sup>8</sup> By the sixteenth century, printed collections of popular antiquities were in demand, alongside the highly popular Broadside ballads attested from the fifteenth century (Shepard 1962). The status of Broadside ballads as evidence of popular tradition has been questioned on the grounds that they were neither 'folk' nor 'literary'; yet in terms of cash-earning power and ideological influence, they occupied a place far surpassing that of the now acknowledged, then marginalised, masterpieces, not disanalogous to that of the best-selling tabloids today (Bold 1979: 66-82). In Greece, by contrast, popular demand at the time was not for ballads and collections of antiquities, but for chapbooks (*phylladia*) popularising the feats of Alexander the Great and of Apollonios of Tyre, the love stories of Voskopoula, Erofilis and Rotokritos, or the religious fortitude of Abraham, all of which, printed at the Greek presses in Venice, enjoyed wide circulation in the towns and villages of Greece (Veloudis 1974) and helped to mould popular consciousness during the Tourkokratia. The absence of interest in popular culture as such at this stage in Greece suggests that the making of 'folklore' is a feature of developing bourgeois and urban societies rather than traditional and rural ones.

It was not until the eighteenth century, however, that folk songs began to attract the attention of philosophers, poets and litterateurs. In England, when Joseph Addison, as editor of *The Spectator*, dared to introduce in his columns in 1703 a discussion of the two ballads 'Chevy Chase' and 'Babes in the Wood', his tone was defensive: 'it is impossible that anything should be universally tasted and approved by *the Multitude, though they are only the Rabble of a Nation*, which hath not in it some peculiar Aptness to please and gratify the Mind of Man' (Wells 1950: 225, my emphases). Soon after, John Gay's use of ballad tunes in *The Beggar's Opera* (1723), controversial at the time, attracted the interest of parties at all levels in the music of folk ballads, although

8. These and other sources are cited in Wells (1950: 206).

some time was to elapse before it was systematically collected and studied.<sup>9</sup> Literary interest in the ballads during the eighteenth century sometimes approached almost guilty enthusiasm: Thomas Gray, on discovering the Scottish 'original' of 'Douglas', exclaimed 'It is divine . . . Aristotle's best rules are observed in it in a manner that shows that the author had never heard of Aristotle. It begins in the fifth act of the play' (ed. Gosse 1885: II.316); while Shenstone shrewdly captures the change in public taste in his remark, four years prior to the publication of Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), and no less than twenty-two years before Herder's dissertation (1783-4), 'The public has seen all that art can do, and they want the more striking effects of wild, enthusiastic genius' (1761, cited by Wells 1950: 230). The success of Percy's collection, based on the chance discovery in a Shropshire village of manuscripts dating back at least a hundred years, was due less to his scholarly merits and editorial practices as viewed by modern standards — he included literary pieces from Chaucer to his own time 'to atone for the rudeness of the more obsolete poems' — than to the growing literary demand of the times. Thus, although motivated by antiquarian interest, to compare the present with the past on the basis of conserved manuscripts rather than live sources, the collection made a deep and lasting impact on subsequent collections of texts and music, especially in Scotland, and on British literary taste and practice. It also helped form a model for German collections, and attracted the interest of Herder.

The English contribution to the growth of folklore studies during the eighteenth century was essentially practical, reflecting a profound change in literary and musical tastes among the wider public, but with no idealisation of the concept 'folk' — Addison's term 'Rabble of a Nation' is not untypical — and with no appeal to national consciousness or patriotism. As Wilson has emphasised (1973: 819-35), romantic nationalism, as opposed to the liberal nationalism of western Europe and America, developed in cen-

9. The collection of dance tunes in England goes back to Playford in 1650, while the earliest printed collection of songs is Ravenscroft's (1611). Systematic collections begin in the nineteenth century, for example Motherwell (1827), Sandys (1833) and Chappell (1855-9), at about the same time as the foundation of numerous ballad societies such as the Roxburghe Club (1812), Percy Society (1840), Ballad Society (1868).

tral and eastern Europe, leading to what may be termed the first theoretical discussion of 'folklore' by the German scholar, Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803). Drawing on French and Italian thinkers, such as Montesquieu and Vico, Herder formulated for the first time the equation of nation with language, folk, moral virtue, using the terms *Volkslied*, *Volksseele* and *Volks Glaube*: for him, 'the most natural state is one people with one national character', hence the most unnatural state was 'the wild mixtures of various breeds and nations under one sceptre' (cited in Wilson 1973: 822). An examination of the German contribution to folklore is beyond the scope of this paper; however, it is clear that the Greek-speaking peoples of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires constituted, according to Herder's formulation, an unusually 'unnatural' state. Perhaps for that reason, Greek folklore studies from the nineteenth century developed a peculiarly intense form of romantic nationalism. But during the eighteenth century they were non-existent, apart from random recording of songs, tales and vocabulary to support different positions in the language question.<sup>10</sup>

During the nineteenth century, folklore developed in most European countries as a discipline in its own right, alongside and often in association with the study of the societies and cultures of 'primitive' peoples — anthropology — and of the ancient civilisations (Leach 1982: 16 ff). The distinctive features of Greek folklore have been discussed at length by Kyriakidou-Nestoros (1978), Herzfeld (1982) and, most recently, by Danforth (1984). However, it will be useful to summarise them briefly here in relation to developments elsewhere as a corrective to the tendency, prevalent among non-Greek scholars, to exaggerate the negative elements and attribute them all to the 'romantic ethnocentrism' of the Greeks. First, the archaeological model for folklore, initially proposed by Herder, has played a more dominant and long-lasting role in Greece than elsewhere. In 1871, long after it had been questioned in Europe, N.G. Politis formulates his approach in unpromisingly archaeological terms:

Πρὸς σύνταξιν τοῦ δοκιμίου τούτου περὶ τῆς Νεοελληνικῆς Μυθολογίας, συνήγαγον λείψανα τῆδε κάκεισε διεσπαρμένα εἴτε ἐν παραμυθίοις, εἴτε

10. Relevant sources are cited and discussed by Kyriakidou-Nestoros (1978: 49-59).



ἐν συναξαρίοις τοῦ μεσαίωρος, εἴτε ἐν διαφόροις τοπικαῖς παραδόσεσι, παρατηρῶν μετὰ χαρᾶς. ὅτι ἐν τῷ οὕτως ἀπαρτισθέντι μωσαϊκῷ πολλὰ τῆς ἀρχαίας μυθολογίας μέρη ἀπεικονίζονται.

(1871:4)

Some thirty years after new editorial principles for the collection and edition of folk ballads were pioneered by F.J. Child (1884), who insisted on publishing unchanged every known variant of each ballad, without prejudice to 'superior', 'inferior', 'original' or 'derivative' versions, Politis defined his editorial task in philological terms borrowed directly from the classical discipline of textual criticism:

Τοιαύτην ἀκολουθῶν μέθοδον κατήρτισα ἐκ πασῶν τῶν παραλλαγῶν ἐκάστου τῶν ἐκδιδομένων ἀσμάτων τὸ κείμενον αὐτῶν. Ἡ ἐκλογή μιᾶς παραλλαγῆς ἐκάστου δὲν ἤρκει, διότι καὶ ἡ τελειοτάτη παραλλαγή παρορσιάζει ἑλλείψεις, αἵτινες ὁμως εὐκόλως ἐπανορθοῦνται διὰ τῆς βοήθειας ἄλλων παραλλαγῶν. Ὅθεν ἔχων πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν πάσας τὰς παραλλαγὰς τοῦ ἀσματος, παραβάλλων στίχον πρὸς στίχον αὐτάς, ἀποκαθίστων τὸ ἄσμα, οὐδὲν τὸ ἴδιον, οὐδὲ λέξιν, οὐδὲ γράμμα κἂν παρεμβάλλον. Ἡ ἐργασία μου εἶναι ὡς ἡ τοῦ ἐκδότου φιλολογικοῦ κειμένου, ὅστις ἐπὶ τῇ βάσει τῶν ἐν τοῖς χειρογράφοις γραφῶν τὸ ἐπεξεργάζεται, περιοριζόμενος εἰς μόνην τὴν ἀποκατάστασιν (*recensio*) καὶ μὴ ἀποτολμῶν διόρθωσιν (*emendatio*). Διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦτον εἰς τὰ τραγούδια, τῶν ὁποίων δὲν εἶχον πολλὰς παραλλαγὰς, παρέμειναν ἀτέλεια . . .

(1914 : ζ'-ζ')

This adherence in Greece to the archaeological model is generally consistent with the tendency to privilege the past over the present, and to validate the study of folklore primarily in terms of its links with the glorious classical past, as a living demonstration of the continuity of the Greek nation. In consequence, Greek folklore has tended to isolate itself from developments, both theoretical and practical, elsewhere in Europe, turning inwards and backwards on its own past. Second, the romantic idealisation of the concept of 'folk', and of folksongs as the spontaneous creation of the eternal spirit of the nation, although general throughout Europe,<sup>11</sup> reached unprecedented dimensions in Greece in view

11. See Wilson (1973: 819-35) for a summary and discussion of the origins of the concept in Herderian thought. As just one example of its tenacity among the most advanced western collectors and editors, Hart's summary of Child's estimation of the European ballad may be cited: 'a distinct species of poetry, preceding art poetry, . . . the product of a homogeneous people, the expression of our common human

of her vulnerable position as an emerging nation and consequent territorial ambitions, unpopular elsewhere. This blatantly political factor should be confronted as such, rather than be subjected to the ironic sneers of British academics. It is perhaps significant that the same defensive idealisation of folk culture can be paralleled in Ireland, in reaction to what is regarded as centuries of British exploitation and repression.<sup>12</sup> Whether we like it or not, folklore is inextricably bound up with nationalism and politics, and before accusing Greek — or Irish — folklorists of 'small-nation chauvinism', or escaping into a safe and detached indifference, we might do well to re-examine our own part in the development of Greek folklore.

On the one hand, the extent to which Greek folklore has been ignored by European scholars in the field can only partially be explained by its unusual direction: considering the wealth of available material, the exclusion of modern Greece from standard anthologies and studies is remarkable. On the other hand, the excessive attentions, both deprecating and laudatory, lavished upon it by western European classicists and historians is no less unusual. 'Fallmerayerism' has been countered not only in Greece with what might be regarded as an excess of patriotic zeal, but also by European classical scholars from the mid-nineteenth century with outright plunder and appropriation: thus Wachsmuth (1864), Schmidt (1871, 1877) and Lawson (1909), to cite but a few examples, validate Greek folklore only insofar as it can elucidate problems of ancient Greek religion, mythology and literature (Danforth 1984: 53-85). There are some signs of change in current anthropological and sociological research.

To sum up: the distinctive features of Greek folklore to date include its marginalisation within the wider context of European folklore studies, its subordination to the classics, and its adherence to the notion of the folksong as *written text* rather than as *sung performance*. In contrast to almost every other European

*nature, of the mind and heart of the people, never of the personality of an individual, therefore devoid of subjectivity and self-consciousness. The author counts as nothing' (italics mine) (1906: 804). Child's idealisation of the 'folk' ballad stands in marked contrast to his contempt for the Broadside, see Bold (1979: 1-4).*

12. The point is discussed by Messenger (1983: 117-23) in a provocative, if at times arrogant and irritating essay.



country which claims an interest in folklore, the music remains a relatively neglected field.<sup>13</sup> Western European scholars must share responsibility with Greek folklorists for this situation.

**Who are the folk?: the literary Nereid, radiophonic orality, and the dentist's waiting-room (a twentieth-century perspective)**

'The remains of all living folk (or national) thought are rolling with an accelerated final plunge into the abyss of oblivion', warned Herder (Gillies 1945: XXV.11), well over two centuries ago. How much closer are we today to an objective definition of the role of the 'folk'?

The dilemma can be illustrated from personal experience in the field, which underlines a more general problem by no means exclusively contemporary in its implications. Some twenty years ago, while collecting folk material in the Pelion region, I visited a remote village, then linked by only one track (and four hours' rough bus-ride) to Larisa, without electricity or regular running water. I recorded much material from the villagers, most of whom, if not illiterate, seemed largely untouched by the effects of urbanisation and education: folktales about *drakoi* (ogres), princes and princesses, told in the village square by the sole café and grocery-store proprietor, with contemporary accretions; stories about ghosts, devils and supernatural creatures (*stoicheia*, *xotika*); several songs, sung either in public by the men, or in the seclusion of their homes by the women. A mine of pure folklore! Yet, on closer consideration, two instances made me wonder . . .

A 65-year old widow, relating her former husband's unsolicited attentions from a Nereid, began thus:

“Λοιπόν”, τοῦ εἶπε, ὅτι “ἐγώ”, λέει, “εἶμαι νεράιδα, ἂν ἔχεις διαβάσει Ὀδύσσεια, ἢ Θιά ἢ Καλυψώ ποῦ βάσταζε τὸν Ὀδυσσεύα ἐπὶ ὀκτὼ χρόνια

13. Prior to the publication of the third volume of the series entitled *Ellenika Demotika Tragoudia* (Academy of Athens, 1968), now followed by the Institute for Balkan Studies at Thessaloniki with *Tragoudia tes Boreiodutikes Thrakes* (Thessaloniki 1981), musical transcription of Greek folk songs has been largely inaccessible outside the Folklore Archives, with the important exceptions of the songs collected by the Swiss musicologist and neo-hellenist Baud-Bovy (1935) and his pupil Bouvier (1960). Musicological studies have also been comparatively neglected, but see Baud-Bovy (1958, 1973) and Beaton (1981). There are welcome signs of change among Greek scholars of the younger generation.

καὶ δὲν τὸν ἄφηνε νὰ πάει στὴν πατρίδα του . . . Μὴ φοβάσαι, δὲ σὲ κάνω τίποτα . . . Σ'ἔχω ἀπὸ μικρὸ παιδί ποῦ σὲ παρακολουθῶ”.

Not even the most romantic adherent of the 'continuity' school could seriously maintain that the reference to the *Odyssey* reflects unbroken oral memory, rather than the assimilation of an item of school-lore, appropriate to her story and also, be it noted, to the presuppositions of school teachers and folklorists. Or, quite simply, she may have included the reference to impress and please, since she was aware of my interest in ancient Greek. The 'folk', however defined, will often provide information they think is expected, or even deliberately mislead.<sup>14</sup> Neither they nor we are 'innocent'.

The second instance to arouse interest was recorded from a 45-year old married woman, barely literate, who sang complete versions of the ballads of 'The Dead Brother', 'Evgenoula' and others, 'exactly as I learned them from my mother', as she assured me. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of her words; yet her 'texts' reproduced almost verbatim those of N.G. Politis, demonstrably conflation of numerous regional variants (1914: 138-40, cf. 224-5). All her songs were sung to the same stereotyped tune, although recollection of words and control of pitch proved faltering throughout her performance. Years later I discovered by chance that 'Politis' ballads' had been popularised to the very same tune on the radio and throughout northern Greece in the decades of the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>15</sup> Both women were indubitably 'of the folk' (*tou laou*); yet could their material count as 'folklore' in view of the ineradicable traces of literary and urban contamination?

Not long afterwards, a reverse experience occurred. The best examples of Epirot songs and laments in my archives were recorded, not in a remote village of Epiros, but in a dentist's waiting-room in Larisa. The singer was a young and literate nurse

14. In the west of Ireland, the practice of deceiving foreign anthropologists and folklorists, particularly with regard to their knowledge of Gaelic, is aptly described by the verb 'to cod', see Messenger (1983: 14).

15. Information owed to the kindness of Chryssanthi Bien. Field recordings cited from the village of Sklithron, Aytas were undertaken with the collaboration of Christos Alexiou (1962-5), those from Larisa and surrounding villages with Vassiliki Papayianni (1963-4).

from Epiros, highly conscious of her singing style, with all accomplishments of glottal stops, vocal ornamentation and tonal variation. Neither tune nor text was fixed: her rendering of laments (for the death of a daughter, a bride, or for the departure of sons to foreign parts) differ from published recordings; nor was a single song in her repertoire repeated in identical form on subsequent occasions.<sup>16</sup> The drone which intermittently accompanies her performance was supplied by the dentist, also from Epiros, for whom she worked. To lifelong residents of Larisa are also owed several laments and stories about Charos in my archives.<sup>17</sup>

These field experiences provoke certain questions. First, is the nurse — or the dentist — to be excluded from the category of 'folk' on the grounds that she/he was literate, living and working within a small urban environment, despite the fact that both songs and singing style belong to what is known of the Epirot oral tradition? Are the Pelion village women to be included on the grounds of virtual illiteracy and peasant status, even though their material shows signs of interference from influences extraneous to the 'folk'? Yes, if the question is answered in terms of the context of the recordings and the status of the informants. No, if answered in terms of the nature of their material. Both, arguably. A further question concerns the present and future domain of Greek folklore research: does the slow but indubitable

16. The importance of variation, as opposed to *verbatim* memorisation of a fixed text, is generally acknowledged, at least in western Europe, to indicate a lively rather than a moribund state of affairs, see the definition of folk music provided by the International Folk Music Council (1955: 23): 'Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are: (1) *continuity*, which links the present to the past; (2) *variation*, which springs from the creative impulse of the group; and (3) *selection* by the community, which determines the form or forms in which the music survives'. The theoretical and practical implications of variation for an understanding of the nature of oral tradition are best illustrated by Lord from his richly documented field work undertaken with Milman Parry: for examples, see Lord (1960: 28, 78). The question is further developed in relation to medieval and modern Irish material by O'Coilean (1977: 7-35), with implications significant also for medieval Greek literature and oral tradition. For a different view, based on Vedic material from southern India, see Smith (1977: 141-53). A general summary of scholarly positions, with illustrations from the folklore of many peoples, may be found in Finnegan (1977: 52-87).

17. Among my best informants was a couple, aged 55 to 60 years, who could neither deny nor affirm their belief in Charos. After a vivid and detailed description of his physical appearance (black clothes, black wings, sword etc.), not improbably modelled on the iconography of the Archangel Michael, they suddenly interjected the remark,

demise of traditional village life necessarily spell the death of folklore? Or is there still useful material to be collected, however urban and 'contaminated'? Was there ever such a thing as pure *laos* or *laographia*, since the inception of literacy in the Greek world, except in the minds of the *laographoi*?

At this point the history of the words themselves may be usefully summarised. *Laos* has undergone minimal morphological and lexical change since Homeric times, yet the semantic shifts and discontinuities are considerable. In Homeric Greek, *laos* signified 'men', usually of the army, whether of large or small divisions, or male dependents upon a patron. Classical Greek extended its meanings to include the male assembly of persons in the theatre, qualified to express an opinion on matters of public interest (Liddell-Scott-Jones s.v.) New Testament Greek added a wider dimension by including such meanings as 'crowd of people', 'household retinue', 'people of Israel' (chosen by God), 'congregation', 'church' and 'laity'; the word was frequently used alongside, but distinct from, *ethnos* (class, order, nation, *pl.* Gentile peoples), and with religious connotations (Lampe 1961: s.v.v.). In Byzantine Greek, the Christian meanings of *laos* predominated, although the word continued to be employed in the older sense of 'army', and was not synonymous with *ochlos* ('common herd').<sup>18</sup> Throughout the Tourkokratia, and even during the War of Independence, the words *genos*, *ethnos* and *patrida* predominate

possibly to allay suspicions as to their superstitious and gullible nature, 'Of course we don't really believe any of this; but it's what people (*kosmos*) say'. At that moment their young son passed through the room, and at once they glanced surreptitiously towards the window lest Charos appear to avenge their disavowal. A similar ambivalence regarding 'folk' commitment to the truth of a tale narrated can also be discerned in my recording of 'Kalypso the nereid': 'She said she occupied (*echel*) certain areas . . . Good luck to her patience. It seems she would go wherever there was water, in the gulleys. She even took out a tobacco-pouch and offered him (*sc.* narrator's husband) a cigarette, a cigarette with a cork (*phello*, presumably a filter-brand). Of course they don't really have cigarettes, it's just imagination (*phantasia*). But he saw her, just like you see someone and talk to them face to face'. Such examples, which can be paralleled in the west of Ireland, demonstrate how fragile 'folk belief' remains in the presence of urban and academic intruders.

18. See, for example, the use of *laos* and *ethne* by Kekaumenos, edd. Wassiliwsky and Jernstedt (1965), and commentary by Haldon (1971) in an unpublished M.A. dissertation.

in appeals to Greek consciousness.<sup>19</sup> Only after the establishment of the Greek state, was the word *laos* used increasingly to mean 'people' in the Herderian sense of *Volk*, as carriers of the eternal spirit (*pneuma*) of the Greek nation (*ethnos*), whose values are transmitted 'in the blood' (*sto aimá*).<sup>20</sup> The nationistic and religious overtones of the word continue to this day, and are exploited with evident success by the present socialist government, as reference to political slogans shows.<sup>21</sup> Yet *laos* is rarely, if ever, used by ordinary people of themselves: it denotes not 'real' people, but a concept of the collective consciousness for popular will and power, so generalised as to exclude direct reference to the speaker or addressees. The normal word for 'ordinary people' in the non-political sense is *kosmos* (AG 'world', 'universe'), with the diminutive *kosmakis* denoting something akin to our 'man in the street', who pays for the excesses of the rich — and of the politicians.

The term *laographia* was introduced, after careful consideration of alternatives, by N.G. Politis around 1883, at a time when the romantic concept of *laos* had fully evolved; from 1909 it was adopted officially to the exclusion of other terms.<sup>22</sup> As Herzfeld has suggested (1982:13), *laographia* was preferred to *ethnographia* because *laos* denotes the Hellenic nation without reference to the educated élite, hence a study of its culture helped demonstrate that the common people were in no way unworthy of the absolute

19. It is significant that Nikolaos Sophianos, in eulogising the beauty of the Greek race and language during the sixteenth century, uses the terms *genos* (Greek people) and *ethne* (other nations) in the epilogue to his *Grammar* (ed. Legrand 1874); while in the *Greek Nomarchy*, (1806), the works of General Makryiannis, and also of Korais (1828-35, 1833), the words *genos*, *ethnos* and *patrida/patris* are frequent.

20. One citation, drawn from Zambelios (1857: 693-4) must suffice to illustrate a general phenomenon. It is worth citing in full:

Ο Λαός, ἔμπυχος ἀντιπροσώπευσις τῆς Φυλῆς, τῶν ἐμφύτων ῥοπῶν, τῆς γλώσσης τοῦ παλαιοῦ Πανελληνίου, μόνον ὃν ὑπαρκτόν, ἔμπνουν, ἐνεργόν ἐν μέσῳ παραδοσέων καὶ ἰδεῶν ἀφηρημένων, ἐμβληματίζει ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχορραγούσης βυζαντινῆς πολιτείας τὴν συνοχὴν τοῦ παρελθόντος, καὶ μέλλοντος, τὴν συμφιλίωσιν δύο κόσμων διακεχωρισμένων ἕως τοῦδε, τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου Ἑλληνισμοῦ, καὶ τοῦ νεωτέρου Ευρωπαϊκοῦ. References owed to the kindness of D. Tziouvas.

21. See, for example, "Ὁ Λαός ΘΕΛΕΙ, ὁ Λαός ΜΠΟΡΕΙ νὰ κάνει τὴν ἈΛΛΑΓΗ" (1981).

22. See sources cited by Kyriakidou-Nestoros (1978: 152) and Herzfeld (1982: 13, 97-9).

moral value implicit in the term *ethnos*. Unlike *ethnographia*, current in western Europe since 1834, *laographia* could boast an exclusive — if not particularly illustrious — Hellenic pedigree, the verb *laographeo* having existed in Hellenistic times for the collection of taxes from registered persons, particularly in Ptolemaic Egypt (Liddell-Scott-Jones: s.v.).

Both *laos* and *laographia* accurately reflect the political, nationistic and even religious significations of Greek folklore, not all shared by their European equivalents.<sup>23</sup> Greek folklore, as an academic discipline and as a prominent subject of university and school curricula, has proved throughout its formative stages quintessentially romantic, above all in its preoccupation with the continuity of culture from antiquity to the present and in its idealisation of the spontaneity of the forms of expression of the Greek 'soul' (*psyche*). While there has been a welcome shift of emphasis at the level of academic research (Meraklis 1973, 1984, Kyriakidou-Nestoros 1975, 1978), the guidelines issued by the Greek Ministry of Education to teachers continue to recommend that the similarities between folk songs and ancient Greek texts be stressed.<sup>24</sup>

If these precepts are to be rejected as an anachrony, what is to replace them? Can folklore be redefined in terms relevant to a contemporary and increasingly urbanised society? Merkalis (1973: 14) sums up the aims of folklore in the following terms:

Folklore has a clear object of research: the people (*laos*) of a country, the whole people, as expressed through its culture, which it moulds continually, utilising elements of its tradition (*paradosis*) together with new elements provided by the present and ever-changing conditions. In this constant process of becoming (*gignesthai*) pertaining to folk culture (*laikos politismos*), some features of the tradition survive virtually unchanged, others are modified and readapted, while others disappear completely. These last concern Folklore . . . only insofar as they can help determine the origin or generally the clarification of a particular phenomenon which continues, although modified, to have its place . . . in contemporary society. For Folklore is a discipline which is

23. The term *Volkskunde* replaced the older *Volksgeist* and *Germanistik* in 1858 (Riehl 1935) followed by the English *folklore* in 1886 (Thoms: 842-3) and the Danish *Folkeminder*. Italian and French have preferred the more general terms *tradizioni popolari* and *traditions populaires*. The fullest definition of *laographia* is given by Politis (1909: 6-9).

24. *Paideutikos Diorismos* 831 (15-20 September 1977). Information owed to the kindness of D. Scavdi.

concerned above all with contemporary man . . . Finally, Folklore differs from Sociology . . . in that the latter, when formulating rules and shaping its constituent forms, remains indifferent to the psychological and spiritual dispositions and reactions (*psychikes kai pneumatikes diatheseis kai antidraseis*) of ■ people, also to the variety of forms given them by the people.

But who, precisely, constitute the *laos*? And can the culture(s) of a whole people, unless viewed romantically as a collective consciousness, be satisfactorily studied under one discipline? The attempt to extend the reference of folklore so broadly eventually undermines the discipline itself, as is aptly illustrated by the extreme agnosticism of Louis Armstrong's remark 'All music's folk music; leastwise I never heard no horse make it' (cited by Lloyd 1967: 17). Similarly, in a provocative essay, Alan Dundes (1978: 1-21) succeeds in debunking outmoded definitions and nineteenth-century hangovers, and proposes an answer in the broadest possible terms to the question 'Who are the folk?': the 'folk' is any group of people, two or more, who share at least one common factor, such as kinship, occupation, religion, race, residence, or age, and illustrating his argument with a wide range of jokes, children's games, graffiti and 'in-talk'. His approach brings folklore out of the antiquarian's study into the contemporary world, out of the village into modern industrial society. But the term 'folk', if extended to include businessmen, spacemen, shipowners and so on, means at once everyone and no-one. There are further complications, as Leach has pointed out (1982: 124-5), in studying the cultures of groups too close to oneself, where personal factors and power relations constantly intrude. Lloyd's method (1967) of analysing the changing nature and function of folk songs in an urban environment such as England today perhaps offers the most promising direction.

#### **Orality and literacy: their interaction in modern Greek culture**

If the notion of folklore as a discipline which exists and operates in a mode different from — and uncontaminated by — literate culture is discarded, as it must be if folk material is to retain its relevance in the modern world, some of the difficulties disappear. After all, the intrusion of the literate and urban world on 'folk' culture is by no means a contemporary phenomenon: it constitutes the link between past and present, present and future, since all 'folk texts' handed down from the past are owed either to writing

or to technological aids (Ong 1982) — that is, to the interference of urban civilisation. Romantic attempts to demonstrate the unbroken continuity in *oral* tradition have been largely discredited, and rightly so. But is there not a danger of contemporary folklorists throwing out the diachronic baby with the bathwater of continuity? Greek tradition, with its documentation of written texts for over three millenia and the survival into the present century of a lively and largely orally-transmitted culture, offers a case, unique in Europe, for the study of the long-term interaction of oral and literate culture.

A few examples, selected from modern Greek literature, must suffice here to indicate the creative and productive interaction between 'popular' and 'learned' traditions throughout their history, undermining the very distinction usually drawn between the two traditions. By 'modern Greek literature', I refer to all texts, by whatever means recorded, extant in the modern Greek language, that is, from about the twelfth century to the present. The so-called 'Ptochoprodromic poems', among the earliest modern Greek texts linguistically, show remarkable sophistication in their exploitation of literary allusions to ancient and Byzantine writers and of popular tradition in order to make a case relevant to twelfth-century society on the state and status of the writer.<sup>25</sup> The fact that Theodore Prodromos, despite the reservations of certain Byzantinists, remains their most probable author, is significant in view of his undisputed authorship of the learned verse romance, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, which, despite the archaising language and range of literary allusion, draws simultaneously on imagery documented in the lyrical tradition of the folk songs.<sup>26</sup> It is perhaps the problem of readers today, given the prejudices inherited from the dispute between 'katharevousa' and 'dimotiki', to conceive that the gulf between 'high' and 'low' cultures may have taken different forms in the twelfth century.

25. The poems have been edited by Hesseling and Pernot (1910). For a recent evaluation of their authorship and relevance to twelfth-century society, see Kazhdan (1984: 87-114). A detailed investigation of the author's use of learned, religious and popular sources is currently being made by the Text Seminar of the Centre for Byzantine Studies and Modern Greek, University of Birmingham, preliminary findings to be published shortly (Alexiou).

26. See Alexiou (1977: 39-40).

The interaction between 'learned' and 'popular' trends took new directions in Cretan poetry and drama from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. Bergadis, named but otherwise unknown author of the *Apokopos*, a poem about the Underworld which ranks as the earliest known text to circulate in printed form in the vernacular (1519), subsequently reprinted throughout the Tourkokratia, takes particular delight in subjecting popular themes and motifs to a satirical — and lyrical — overview of traditional attitudes to death.<sup>27</sup> It is irrelevant to speculate on whether the 'popular' elements in the poem stem from the 'folk tradition' of his time, or whether extant folk motifs derive from the poem, since the formulation of the problem oversimplifies the interaction between the written and the spoken word, and since the question has no better chance of an answer than whether the chicken came before the egg.

Different in spirit is the motivation of the anonymous dramatist of the religious drama, *The Sacrifice of Abraham*, probably composed in the late sixteenth century.<sup>28</sup> The remarkable parallels between Sarah's laments for Isaac and modern Cretan folk laments have hitherto attracted most attention, although they have not been analysed extensively;<sup>29</sup> more profound, because absent from the play's Italian model *Lo Isach* and because so integral to the meaning of the drama, is the complex interweaving throughout of the opposing themes of marriage and death, which derives from the deep-rooted popular belief that death is viewed as a form of marriage, marriage as a form of death, while both constitute different stages in the process towards the re-birth and resurrection of the soul. It is at this level that Isaac functions as a model for Christ, hence the use of popular motifs is inseparable from the religious spirit of the play.

As for contemporary Greek culture, from the more sophisticated literary poets to the commercialised popular songs, it draws on folk motifs and idioms more than any other European culture with which I am familiar. Two or three examples must

27. Ed. Alexiou (1975), esp. verses 77-126. For a detailed analysis of the poet's use of folk motifs, see Saunier (1984).

28. Ed. Megas (1954); for date and prototypes, see Bakker (1978).

29. Some parallels are noted by Megas (1954: 134-8) and Alexiou (1974: 77, 169-70, 189, 198); they deserve more detailed investigation.

suffice here. The famous ballad of 'The Bridge of Arta' tells the story of how the master-craftsman (*prōtomastoras*) was obliged to immure his own wife in the foundations of the bridge to make it stand firm. It is based on the widespread belief in foundation ritual, that no edifice can be built without a human sacrifice, or, in other words, nothing made by man can endure unless animated and endowed with a soul. The ballad, widespread throughout the Balkans, has as its central theme the woman's power to safeguard or endanger the passage of her menfolk over a bridge, itself a symbol of a liminal construction between the world of the living and the world of the dead. The primitive rite underlying the ballad is still practised in attenuated form even in urban centres, where it is not uncommon to slaughter an animal (usually a cockerel) and let the blood run into the foundations when a building is constructed. The ballad has itself inspired two plays, by G. Theotokas and N. Kazantzakis, and is allusively exploited by Odysseus Elytis in his *Axion Esti* (1960) to suggest the torment and horror of the civil strife which began in the mountains and tore Greece apart:

Θέ μου, πρωτομάστορα, μ'έκλεισες μέσα στὰ βουνά!

My God, master-craftsman, you have walled me into the mountains!

The victim is Greece (Romiosyni), who cries out to God. As set to music by Mikis Theodorakis, it provides an excellent example of both the subtlety of the use of folk motifs in contemporary poetry and of their powerful effect when extended to contexts relevant to recent experience. In this way, contemporary Greek poets have at their disposal a rich fund of allusive material which is widely known, and their use of folk motifs can be seen as an extension of the allusive method which operates within the folk tradition.<sup>30</sup> Thus even if the folk songs as we know them change character, many of the essential themes, motifs and techniques can survive in new forms.

Nor is the influence of folk songs limited to 'art' poetry, which from the works of Palamas to Seferis and Elytis has tended to exploit the folk tradition either to celebrate 'Greekness' or to lend

30. See Alexiou (1974: 185-205) and Beaton (1980: 58-69) for a discussion, from different perspectives, of the function of imagery in folk songs as a system.



a tone of tragic nostalgia, a visionary charm, to the deep-seated contradiction expressed so frequently in modern Greek culture between aspiration and frustration, characteristic of a disappointed people turned inwards on their past. The presence of folk motifs in popular songs (*laika*) has proved considerably more robust, despite what might be regarded as trivialisation and commercialisation, particularly in the exploitation of two elements in the folk tradition largely suppressed by folklorists and poets — the humorous and the (risqué) erotic. This aspect of contemporary popular culture, largely neglected by scholars, is vitally important to the question of the relevance of folklore in the modern world.

### Two tales from the Dodekanese: a case of 'literary orality'?

The extent to which 'art' poetry is indebted to the folk tradition in modern Greek literature has been indicated, if not demonstrated in detail. But how far has the folk tradition remained immune from literary influences? In order to dispose of the concept of 'pure orality', at least in texts extant from the past century or so, two stories from the island of Kos, published by R.M. Dawkins (1950: 334-49, 486-524), may serve as paradigms. Reference to 'radiophonic orality' has already been made: has 'literate orality' always existed?

Both tales were probably recorded from the same woman, Hatzi-Yiavrouda from the village of Asphendiou, by the antiquarian from Kos, Jakob Zarraftis, in the last decade of the nineteenth century (Dawkins 1950: 1-2). Both contain unusual features. In the first, 'Myrmidonia and Pharaonia' (or 'The Fairy's Revenge'), the complex inter-relations between the two legendary kingdoms over three generations are recounted, from the time the king of Myrmidonia wilfully destroyed trees in a grove sacred to the local dendral spirits in a fit of spite resulting from unrequited love: *πάει καὶ δίνει πελέκι στὰ ἀμίλητα κακόμοιρα δέντρα, ποὺ ἦσα σὰν ὠμορφες κοπελλούδες καὶ σὰν ἐλληνόπουλα* (Dawkins 1950: 336). The reference here and elsewhere (334 *bis*) to the heroic Hellenes is the first intimation of literary contamination.<sup>31</sup> The plot is developed, by a series of

31. See Kakridis 1947: 77-80 for references to 'Hellenes' as legendary giants of olden times in isolated tales collected during the nineteenth century; also Herzfeld (1982:

accretions, from the revenge taken by the tree spirits, Dimitroula (who rejected the king's suit in favour of her heroic and Hellenic ploughman, *zeugadopoulos . . . antreiomenos ellenas*) and her mother, on the king and his family. The theme of Nereid revenge for dendral sacrilege is not, as Dawkins supposed, unparalleled in Greek folklore;<sup>32</sup> however, it is rare in folk tales, although central to the ancient myth of Erysichthon as preserved in pseudo-Hesiod, Kallimachos, Ovid and other sources.<sup>33</sup> Once more, the tale has been scrutinised by classical scholars in search of a Koan origin for the first 'performance' of Kallimachos' sixth hymn and its links with the cult of Demeter (Hollis 1970: 128-32, Sherwin-White 1978: 306-10); it is even cited as a possible 'influence' upon Ovid (Hollis 1970: 132)! Since the tale appears to combine different elements found in Kallimachos (the tree-felling scene) and in Ovid (Mestra and the related themes of *boulimia* and autophagy), the question arises, were the two ancient poets drawing independently from a local, Koan legend, which has survived continuously in oral tradition on the island of Kos down to the late nineteenth century, or may we suspect a double literary intrusion? Dawkins (1950: 348-9) remains cautious, although he favours the former hypothesis on grounds of 'probability' (the improbability of details pertaining to the same myth surviving in oral tradition *in one tale from Kos only* is not considered). Other scholars are ambivalent, although allowing the tale to influence their interpretation of the ancient poetic tradition (Sherwin-White 1978: 308, Hollis 1970: 132); only Kenney (1963: 57) dares to suggest that the tale derives from literary sources. The challenge has been taken up by Fehling (1972: 173-96), whose case against the oral survival of the ancient myth and in favour of a literary-romantic contamination remains unanswered. Meanwhile, it should be noted that Maximus Planudes' translation of

125-7) for a critical deconstruction of the term as a romantic imposition of philhellenes and folklorists.

32. Dawkins (1950: 347). Lawson 1909/1964: 158-9 documents the survival of popular belief in the vengeful habits of felled female tree spirits. They were still common in the mountain regions of Thessaly in the decade following the Second World War (fieldwork from Sklithron, Ayias).

33. Hesiod *fr.* 43a, Kallimachos *Hymns* (ed. Pfeiffer) VI, Ovid *Metamorphoses* VIII.738-878 (ed. Hollis).

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, current since the fourteenth century, was circulating in printed form since 1822 in the edition of J. Fr. Boissonade.<sup>34</sup> As for Kallimachos, connections with our tale are less close, but his poetry had always been familiar to the literate Greek world.<sup>35</sup> Certainly, on an island like Kos where patriotic antiquarians collect folk tales, the literary hypothesis, even if it cannot be proved, is more plausible than the oral.<sup>36</sup>

The existence of literary elements in Hadzi-Yavrouda's second tale, 'Apollonios of Tyre' (or 'Yiannakis') is much clearer. The tale resembles only loosely the ancient romance, extant in Latin translation, which served as one of the sources for Shakespeare's *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*; in most points it follows more faithfully the popular *Rhymed Poem of Apollonios*, first printed in Venice in 1534, with frequent later editions.<sup>37</sup> The link between ancient myth and modern tale remains obscure in one case, but can be documented here through the circulation of popular chap-books. Such instances of literary intrusion are by no means unique, nor should they be ignored: much more research is needed to document insofar as is possible the circulation and influence of all kinds of printed texts in rural Greece from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.<sup>38</sup>

It should be stressed that these tales are in no way 'inferior' by virtue of possible literary 'contamination': in other respects, linguistic and narrative, they conform to the highest standards of popular story-telling. They are no different from tales of

'Rotokritos', with which I have been regaled for hours on end in a village on the Thessalian plain without reference to the Cretan poet Vitzentzos Kornaros. Story-tellers, then as now, absorb elements from all available sources, oral and written, just as Epirot women weave into their *bandes* (borders for wall decoration) the story of such 'Greek' heroes as Robin Hood and Maid Marion.<sup>39</sup> Even in songs, where tradition has proved more conservative due to the control of music, many themes and formulas can be traced to religious and liturgical texts.<sup>40</sup> The folklorist must be alert to all possible sources: for centuries the Greek people has been either literate or read to, even in the villages, and the bourgeois intellectual who ignores this fact today both underestimates and distorts the subject of his own research.

### Some concluding comments

There are no easy answers, but some questions and proposals for the present and future directions of folklore research may be raised. First, the interaction between 'learned' and 'popular', 'written' and 'oral' in modern Greek culture has contributed significantly to the constant renewal of vital elements in both 'literature' (*logotechnia*) and 'folklore' (*laographia*). Almost one hundred years after the invention of both terms, should not the romantic notion of the 'continuity of Hellenism' be replaced with a more historical and concrete concept of the diachronic and intertextual nature of Greek tradition? Traces from the past can be observed elsewhere, in songs, traditions, tales and proverbs (according to the classic categorisations), and they can only be re-traced by reference to written sources. An understanding of their past can help towards an understanding of the quality and endurance of the folk tradition. It may also lead us out of the labyrinth of the death of folklore.

Second, the study of folk material has already been enriched by other disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology and history.

39. Some textiles with this motif date back to the late nineteenth century, and can not be dismissed as examples of modern decadent and non-Hellenic influences. Information owed to the kindness of Fani Balamoti, M.A. dissertation on 'Textiles of Epiros' (University of Birmingham).

40. See Alexiou (1975: 111-40) and Bouvier (1976: 1-5, 49-59) for the interaction of learned, religious and popular traditions in the transmission and survival of the ballad 'The Virgin's Lament'.

34. The significance of this detail is not noted by Kenney or Fehling. My interest in this tale, as well as most of the bibliographical references, are owed to the kindness of A. Henrichs; it will receive closer attention in my projected study of *Greek Myths and Metaphors*.

35. See Pfeiffer (1953: II.lxxii-lxvi) and Wilson (1983: 122, 125, 164).

36. For a comparably 'mixed' tradition in a Lesbian ballad, see Holton (1975: 97-109). My father, George Thomson recalls even more surprising literary intrusions in the stories recorded during the 1920s and 1930s from Tomas O'Croihean, on the remote Blasket Islands: O'Croihean had been taught to read by Brian Kelly, who subsequently sent him books — including Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Gorki's *Childhood*; elements from both eventually found their way into the famous story-teller's repertoire.

37. See Beck (1971: 135-8) for a summary of the poem's transmission.

38. Veloudis (1974) has established the principles and significance of such a study with regard to one of the Greek presses in Venice; while Bakker (1979) provides an exemplary model for the study of the transmission of one text, the Cretan drama *The Sacrifice of Abraham*. The material needs to be collected and studied systematically on a broader basis, along the lines recently suggested by Politis (1982).

A more sophisticated literary analysis of songs and tales, without prejudice to the status of the means of transmission, might reveal much about the craft and composition of texts. They should no longer be regarded as the 'artless, spontaneous and simple' reflections of the 'folk soul'.<sup>41</sup>

Third, the survival of folk songs in Greece today is owed not least to the fact that they are still *sung and danced*: too long they have been studied as *mnēmia tou logou* ('memorials of the word'), despite the fact that the 'folk', unlike poets and scholars, are unable to recite more than a few consecutive lines in verse form.<sup>42</sup> Fortunately, if only for commercial or political purposes, the music of Greek folklore has been exploited in other quarters.

Fourth, Greek folk tradition should be studied within the historical and geographical context which shaped it, namely the Balkan and Anatolian peninsulas from the mid-Byzantine period, without priorisation of the Greek versions as older, and thereby superior, by virtue of their alleged descent from classical myth and literature. Every people, after all, has its own 'continuity'.

Finally, many customs, rites, traditions, collected and classified by objective and progressive folklorists, must strike the western academic of today as reactionary and barbarous, especially as regards the position of women and despite the fact that traditions pertaining to birth, marriage and death are perpetuated almost exclusively by the women themselves: why should young widows be condemned to wear black for the rest of their lives, or worse, shut into their homes behind barred windows and bolted doors to face a life of increasing isolation and dementia?<sup>43</sup> The

41. Colacides' recent study of the imagery of the funeral laments, shortly to be published in the *Proceedings of the Fourth Poetry Symposium* (Patras 1984), provides a model of the kind of literary analysis, informed by post-structuralist theory, which remains to be undertaken. Balamoti's work on textiles (see n. 39 above) provides an invaluable corrective to assumptions of the 'artlessness' of the artefacts of Greek folklore.

42. My experience in the field is that the 'folk' neither memorise nor improvise on the basis of words alone: in 1964, a woman from northern Thessaly, renowned for her skill in the improvisation and performance of laments, refused to sing her examples into my tape-recorder, but declared herself willing to give me the words: without the aid of melody and ritual, she could provide only fragmented lines. For a sensitive and incisive revaluation of the terms for song and spoken verse in ancient Greek texts, and their implications for Indo-European and post-classical tradition more generally, see Nagy (1984: 32-54).

quality of the songs will not necessarily vanish along with the preconceptions of those who sang them, despite changes of form, structure and context.

The best obituary on Folklore was uttered almost before its birth by the mother of James Hogg, one of Sir Walter Scott's informants, some hundred and fifty years ago:

There was never ane o' ma songs prentit till ye prentit them yoursel' and ye hae spoilt them a' thegither. They were made for singing and no for reading, but ye hae broken the charm now and they'll never be sung mair. And the warst thing o' a', they're nouthier right spell'd, nor right setten down (Hogg 1834: 61).

The marginalisation, in contemporary Greek culture, of 'folk song' as performed today, by the very section of society which seeks to promote (and profit from) 'folklore', is encapsulated in the following quatrain from Crete:

Ὅλοι μοῦ λέν' ἀπ' τὸ λαὸ μονάχα ἔχω πελάτες,  
γιατὶ ἡ λύρα μ' ἔδιωξε δλους τσ' ἀριστοκράτες.  
Λύρα, νταῦλι, εἶπανε, δὲ θέλουν νὰ γροικοῦνε,  
γιατὶ νὰι ράτσες ξενικὲς κι αὐτὰ τοὺς ἐνοχλοῦνε.

Dermitzakis (1968: 253).<sup>44</sup>

University of Birmingham  
Centre for Byzantine Studies  
and Modern Greek

#### References

- Alexiou M.B., 1974. *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition* (Cambridge).  
Alexiou M.B., 1975. 'The lament of the Virgin in Byzantine literature and modern Greek folk song', *BMGS* 1 (1975) 111-40.  
Alexiou M.B., 1977. 'A critical reappraisal of Eustathios Makrembolites' "Hysmine and Hysminias"', *BMGS* 3 (1977) 23-43.  
Alexiou M.B., 1983. 'Sons, wives and mothers: aspects of reality and fantasy in some modern Greek ballads', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 1 (1983) 73-111.  
Alexiou S., 1975 (ed.) Μπεργαδής: 'Απόκοπος' Βοσκοπούλα (Athens).  
Bakker W.F., 1978. *The Sacrifice of Abraham* (Birmingham).  
Bakker W.F., 1979. Οἱ παλιὲς ἐκδόσεις τῆς 'Θυσίας τοῦ Ἀβραάμ' 'Ερανιστής 15 (1978-79) 23-74.

43. A recent example of such treatment by the women from a village in Boiotia of a young widow, aged only 19 years, is documented by Scavdi (1984: 135).

44. Reference owed to Scavdi (1984: 154).

Baud-Bovy S., 1935. *Chansons du Dodecanèse*, 2 vols. (Athens).  
 Baud-Bovy S., 1958. *Études sur la chanson cleftique* (Athens).  
 Baud-Bovy 1973. 'Η επικράτηση του δεκαπεντασύλλαβου στο ελληνικό δημοτικό τραγούδι', *Ellēnika* 6 (1973) 301-13.  
 Beaton R.M., 1980. *Folk Poetry of Modern Greece* (Cambridge).  
 Beck H.-G., 1971. *Geschichte der byzantinischen Volksliteratur* (Munich).  
 Boissonade J. Fr., 1822. *P. Ovidii Metamorphoses XV graece versi a Maximo Planude* (Paris).  
 Bold A., 1979. *The Ballad* (London).  
 Bouvier B., 1960. Δημοτικά Τραγούδια από χειρόγεγγο της Μονής των 'Ιβήρων (Athens).  
 Bouvier B., 1976. *Le mirologue de la Viège* (Geneva).  
 Buondelmonti C. *Descriptio Cretae*, ed. e. Legrand: *Description des îles de l'Archipelago* (Paris 1897).  
 Burke P., 1979. *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London).  
 Burkert W., 1979. *Structure and History in Greek Mythology* (University of California at Los Angeles).  
 Chappell W., 1855-59. *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 2 vols. (London; New edition, H.E. Wooldridge, *Old English Popular Music* [London 1893]).  
 Child F.J., 1882-98. *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vols. (Boston; New edition, New York 1965).  
 Cocchiara G., 1952. *Storia del folklore in Europa* (Turin).  
 Danforth L.M., 1982. *The Death of Rituals of Rural Greece* (Princeton).  
 Danforth L.M., 1984. 'The ideological context of the search for continuities in Greek culture', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 3 (1984) 53-85.  
 Dawkins R.M., 1950. *Forty-five tales from the Dodekanese* (Cambridge).  
 Dermitzakis G., 1968. Κρητικές Μαντινάδες (Sitia).  
 Derrida J., 1974. *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore and London).  
 Derrida J., 1978. *Writing and Difference* (London).  
 Detienne M., 1977. *The Gardens of Adonis* (London).  
 Detienne M., 1979. *Dionysos Slain* (Baltimore and London).  
 Detienne M., 1981. *L'invention de la mythologie* (Paris).  
 Dundes A., 1978. *Essays in Folkloristics* (New Delhi).  
 Fallmerayer J.P., 1830. *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters*, vol. I (Stuttgart and Tübingen).  
 Fallmerayer J.P., 1845. *Fragmente aus dem Orient*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart and Tübingen).  
 Fehling D., 1972. 'Erysichthon oder das Märchen von der mündlichen Überlieferung', *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 115-116 (1972-3) 172-96.  
 Finnegan R., 1977. *Oral Poetry* (Cambridge).  
 Foucault M., 1970. *The Order of Things* (London).  
 Foucault M., 1972. *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London).  
 Friedrich P., 1978. *The Meaning of Aphrodite* (Chicago).  
 Geertz C., 1973., *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York; English edition, London 1975).  
 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae*, ed. R.E. Jones (London 1929).  
 Gillies A., 1945. *Herder* (Oxford).  
 Gordon R.L., 1980 (ed.). *Myth, Religion and Society: structuralist essays by M. Detienne, L. Gernet, J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet* (Cambridge).  
 Gray T., *Poetical Works*. Ed. Gosse (New York 1885).  
 Greek Nomarchy = 'Ελληνική Νομαρχία, ed. N.G. Tomadakis (Athens 1948).  
 Harari J., 1979 (ed.). *Textual Strategies. Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (London).

Hart W.M., 1906. 'Professor Child and the Ballad', *Publications of the Modern Languages Association* 21 (1906) 755-807.  
 Herzfeld M.F., 1977. 'Ritual and textual structures: the advent of spring in rural Greece': *Text and Context: the Social Anthropology of Tradition*, ed. R.K. Kain (Philadelphia).  
 Herzfeld M.F., *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology and the Making of Modern Greece* (Texas).  
 Hesselung D.C. and Pernot H., 1910. *Poemes prodromiques en grec vulgaire* (Amsterdam).  
 Hirschon R., 1983 in *Urban Life in Mediterranean Europe*, edd. M. Kenny and I. Kertzer (Illinois).  
 Hogg J., 1834. *The Domestic Manners and Private Life of Sir Walter Scott* (Glasgow).  
 Hollis A.S., 1970. *Ovid Metamorphoses Book VIII* (Oxford).  
 Holton D.W. 1975. "'The Leprous Queen" — a ballad from Lesbos', *BMGS* 1 (1975) 97-109.  
 Kakridis I.G., 1947. 'Caeneus', *Classical Review* 61 (1947) 77-80.  
 Kapsomenos E.G., 1978. Τὸ ἑλληνικὸ δημοτικὸ τραγούδι (Rethymno).  
 Kapsomenos E.G., 1979. Τὸ σύγχρονο κρητικὸ ἱστορικὸ τραγούδι (Athens).  
 Kazhdan A., 1984. *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge).  
 Kenney E.J., 1963. 'Erysichthon on Cos', *Mnemosyne* 16/1 (1963) 57.  
 Kirk G., 1970. *Myth: its meaning and function in ancient and other cultures* (Cambridge).  
 Korais A., 1828-35. *Atakta*, 5 vols. (Paris).  
 Korais A., 1833. (Paris).  
 Kyriakidou-Nestoros A., 1975. Λαογραφικά Μελετήματα (Athens).  
 Kyriakidou-Nestoros A., 1978. 'Η Θεωρία της Νεοελληνικής Λαογραφίας (Athens).  
 Lampe G.W.H., 1961. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford).  
 Lawson J.C., 1909. *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion* (Cambridge; new edition, New York 1964).  
 Leach E., 1982. *Social Anthropology* (London).  
 Liutprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis: Liudprandi Opera*, ed. J. Becker (3 ed. Hanover 1915).  
 Lloyd A.L., 1967. *Folk Song in England* (London).  
 Lord A.B., 1960. *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass).  
 Makryiannis (General). 'Απομνημονεύματα, 2 vols. Ed. G. Vlachoyiannis (Athens 1947).  
 Makryiannis (General). 'Οράματα και Θάματα Ed. A. Papakostas (Athens 1983).  
 Maranda E.K. and Maranda P., 1971. *Structural Models in Folklore and Transformational Essays: Approaches to Semiotics*, ed. T.A. Sebeok (The Hague).  
 Megas G., 1954 (ed.). 'Η "Θυσία του 'Αβραάμ"' (Athens).  
 Meraklis M.G., 1973. 'Ο Σύγχρονος Λαϊκός 'Ελληνικός Πολιτισμός (Athens).  
 Meraklis M.G., 1984. 'Ελληνική Λαογραφία (Athens).  
 Messenger J., 1983. *An Anthropologist at Play: ballad-mongering in Ireland and its consequence for research* (University Press of America).  
 Motherwell W., 1827. *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern* (Glasgow).  
 Nagy G., 1984. 'Oral poetry and the Homeric poems: broadening and narrowing of terms', *Critical Exchange* 16 (1984) 32-54.  
 O'Coilean S., 1977. 'Oral or literacy?: Some strands of the argument', *Studia Hibernica* 17-18 (1977-78) 7-35.  
 Ong W.J., 1982. *Orality and Literacy* (London).  
 Pashley R., 1837. *Travels in Crete*, 2 vols. (London).  
 Percy T. *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript* (1765) 3 vols., ed. Hales (London 1867).

- Pfeiffer R., 1953 (ed.). *Callimachus*, 2 vols. (Oxford).
- Playford J., (1650). *The English Dancing Master*, edd. Bridgewater and Mellor (London 1934).
- Politis A., 1982 'Το βιβλίο στις προβιομηχανικές κοινωνίες', National Research Centre, Athens.
- Politis N.G., 1871. Μελέτη ἐπὶ τοῦ βίου τῶν Νεωτέρων Ἑλλήνων, τόμος Α (Athens).
- Politis N.G., 1909. Λαογραφία, *Laographia* 1 (1909) 3-18.
- Politis N.G., 1914. Ἐκλογαὶ ἀπὸ τὰ Τραγούδια τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Λαοῦ (Athens).
- Pouqueville F.C.H.L., 1820. *Voyage dans la Grèce* (Paris).
- Propp V., 1984. *Theory and History of Folklore*. Ed. A. Liberman (Manchester University Press).
- Ravenscroft T., 1611. *Deutoremelia, Pammelia, Melismata* (London).
- Riehl W.H. 1935. *Die Volkskunde als Wissenschaft* (Berlin).
- Rorty R., 1978. 'Philosophy as a kind of writing: an essay on Derrida', *New Literary History* 10 (1978) 141-60.
- Rorty R., 1980. *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton).
- Sandys W., 1833. *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern* (London).
- Saunier G., 1983. Τραγούδια τῆς Ξενιτιάς (Athens).
- Saunier G., 1984. 'L' "Apocopos" de Bergadis et la tradition populaire', *Kentron Mikrasiatikōn Spoudōn* (Athens).
- Scavdi D., 1984. *The ritual of lament in Greek traditional society* (Ph.D. thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham).
- Schmidt B., 1871. *Das Volksleben der Neugriechen und das hellenische Alterthum* (Leipzig).
- Schmidt B., 1877. *Griechische Märchen, Sagen und Volkslieder* (Leipzig).
- Shepard L., 1962. *The Broadside Ballad* (London).
- Sherwin-White S.M., 1978. 'Ancient Cos', *Hypomnemata* 51 (1978) 306-10.
- Smith J.D., 1977. 'The singer or the song? A re-assessment of Lord's "oral-formulaic theory"', *Man* 22/1 (1977) 141-153.
- Sperber D., 1975. *Re-thinking Symbolism* (Cambridge).
- Stewart S., 1978. *Nonsense: Aspects of Intertextuality in Folklore and Literature* (Baltimore and London).
- Thoms W.J., 1886. 'On folklore', *Athenaeum* 27 August, 842-3.
- Tournefort M., 1718. *A Voyage into the Levant* (English edition, London).
- Tziouvas D., 1984. *The nationalism of the demoticists and its impact on their literary theory* (1888-1930). Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham.
- Veloudis G., 1974. *Das griechische Druck- und Verlagshaus 'Glikys' in Venedig (1670-1854)* (Wiesbaden).
- Wachsmuth K., 1864. *Das alte Griechenland im neuen* (Bonn).
- Wells E.K., 1950. *The Ballad Tree* (New York).
- William of Malmesbury, *Gesta rerum anglorum, atque Historia Novella* ed. Hardy (London, 1840).
- Wilson N.G., 1983. *Scholars of Byzantium* (London).
- Wilson W.A., 1973. 'Herder, Folklore and Romantic Nationalism', *Journal of Popular Culture* 6/4 (1973) 819-35.
- Zambelios S., 1857. *Βυζαντινὰ Μελέται* (Athens).

## Myth and Text: Readings in the Modern Greek Novel

RODERICK BEATON

'... they did not suspect that La Mancha and Montiel and the knight's lean figure would be, for posterity, no less poetic than the episodes of Sinbad ... For in the beginning of literature is the myth, and in the end as well.'  
J.L. Borges, 'Parable of Cervantes and the Quixote'

*Mythos* is used by Aristotle both in its received sense in his day, meaning a story which need not be literally true but has a special institutional status outside of literature, and in a sense which seems to be new in the fourth century B.C., as a rational ordering of events (*synthesis ton pragmaton*), a mediating term between story (*pragmata*) and discourse (*tragodia*). It is specifically by means of *mythos* (whether invented or traditional) that tragedy (discourse) can be an imitation (mimesis) of action (praxis/story).<sup>1</sup> The first meaning is close to the various nuances

The central idea for this paper was first proposed at a seminar given at the University of Birmingham in October 1982, and parts of it formed sections of a lecture read at Harvard University and at the University of Cambridge during November 1983. I am grateful to participants in discussion on all three occasions as well as to undergraduate and postgraduate students of the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, King's College London, for many insights which have contributed to the paper in its present form. Its shortcomings remain, of course, my own responsibility.

1. *Poetics* 1447a9; 49b5-7; 51b23-9; 51b34-52a21; 53a38; 53b5; 53b23-7; 56a9-10. Aristotle's clearest definition of *mythos* is at 49b5-7: ἔστιν δὲ τῆς μὲν πράξεως ὁ μῦθος ἢ μίμησις (λέγω γὰρ μῦθον τὴν σύνθεσιν τῶν πραγμάτων). On the significance of this usage see Else 1963: 242-3 (and n.81 on the received senses of the word); cf. 8 and 321: 'What the poet "makes", then, is not the actuality of events but their logical structure, their meaning'. For *mythos* as 'myth', see 53a38 and Else 1963: 506 and n.147.



of 'myth' today, while the second is conventionally translated as the 'plot' of a literary text.

Aristotle's *Poetics* perhaps marks the beginning of a disjunction between those two originally homonymous terms, which can be viewed historically in relation to the emergence of fictional genres in and more especially after his day (New Comedy, Pastoral, the 'novel' or 'romance'), and paves the way for a narrative literature in which the ontological status of the referent is neither assumed nor at stake (this had been the ground of Plato's rejection of the poets). In any case the disjunction today seems at first sight almost complete: it is unusual to find the terms 'myth' and 'plot' co-existing in the same discourse, and the relationship between them has become so murky as almost to be forgotten. Indeed an influential strand of modern structuralist poetics devoted to narrative discourse has discarded the term 'plot' altogether, on the grounds that 'the arrangement [of incidents] is precisely the operation performed by the discourse' (Chatman 1978: 43), and with it the whole theory of Aristotelian mimesis; 'mimesis in words can only be mimesis of words' (Genette 1980: 164).

The argument of this essay is twofold: first, that the structural analysis of myth inaugurated by Claude Lévi-Strauss as a 'structuring of events' in and by language but at a pre- or non-literary level comes uncannily close to Aristotle's unitary term for myth *and* plot; and secondly that it is this unitary function which mediates between the world of events or story and the seemingly closed, autonomous world of literary discourse. The creation of (non-literary) myth demonstrates that actions or events can be taken up by discourse through a process of ordering and selection governed by the structures of language and/or of thought: it is in this sense that (*pace* Genette) language may be said to 'imitate' that which is not language, and in this figurative sense that Aristotelian mimesis is surely to be understood.<sup>2</sup> The 'arrangement of events' that constitutes *mythos* is not identical

2. Cf. Else 1963: 322: 'A poet, then, is an *imitator* in so far as he is a *maker*, viz. of plots. The paradox is obvious. Aristotle has developed and changed the bearing of a concept which originally meant ■ faithful *copying* of pre-existent things, to make it mean a *creation* of things . . . Copying is after the fact; Aristotle's μίμησις creates the fact'.

either to the events themselves such as they may have happened in the 'real' world; or to the ordering of discourse, which by definition can only be an ordering of language.

This ordering of *mythos* is thus literally prior to the ordering of purely language elements into the final form of discourse,<sup>3</sup> although it must be stressed that it is an ordering that takes place wholly *within* language. It follows that 'myth' in this sense really describes a function or a process:<sup>4</sup> it is a truism that there is no such thing as 'pure plot', but it is often not realised that there can be no such thing as 'pure myth' either. It is quite clear from 'The Structural Study of Myth' and the methodology of *Mythologiques* that what is identified by Lévi-Strauss as a special kind of discourse is in fact an *extrapolation* of a function from many different discourses. It is not a new criticism of that methodology that it effectively dismisses as contingent all that binds the 'myth' to its actualisation in a particular language, cultural context, and local determinants of discourse whether oral or written.<sup>5</sup> Myth, in other words, only achieves the status of discourse in the writings of Lévi-Strauss himself, and this in a sense he concedes.<sup>6</sup>

It follows that the status of the mythical function, as an indispensable mediating term in the conversion from story to discourse, from world to language, is not necessarily different in literary and non-literary discourse. 'Myths' may be found in oral traditions of many sorts, in literary texts (Sophocles' *Oedipus*, Joyce's *Ulysses*, the four modern Greek novels to be discussed in this paper), in sub-literary forms where an ideological function is most clearly evident (Barthes 1972) and in scientific discourse (Freud and Lévi-Strauss on *Oedipus*, anthropological discourse *about* myth). In every case the myth is something less than the discourse which actualises it, but at the same time

3. Cf. *Poetics* 1453b and Else's commentary (1963: 408-9): 'Aristotle is still dealing with the structure of the play as such and has not gotten to the writing-out stage . . . The plot of the *Oedipus*, its outline or bare structure, before the play is written out, is what Aristotle has in mind'.

4. Cf. Aristotle on *poiesis* (*Poetics* 1447a9-13 and Else 1963: 8-9: 'The ποιησις, the making or constructing of the poem, is in fact the poetic art itself at work'.).

5. See, in addition to better-known critiques, Dundes 1978.

6. ' . . . it would not be wrong to consider this book in itself as a myth; it is, as it were, the myth of mythology' (Lévi-Strauss 1970: 12).

transcends its formal content, to be isolable as a common function of many different discourses. At its simplest this function can be identified as the naming of actions in language, which is no sooner done than an order and structure are imposed upon them, an order originating in the structures of language, consciousness, or the 'mind' (to beg an important question).<sup>7</sup>

The hypothesis to be tested here is that it is this same function, equivalent to the full range of *mythos* as understood in the *Poetics*, that makes possible the 'translation' of event into language on which literary, no less than non-literary, fictions depend.

A historical reason for the disjunction already mentioned, and amounting today to the commonly assumed view that myth and literature are separate discourses, may be the difficulty that was encountered by emergent fiction in gaining acceptance, not so much as discourse, but as an institution. In the ancient world fiction was beginning to make its appearance, in New Comedy, during Aristotle's lifetime, but the main break with the world of epic and tragedy that is the principal subject of the *Poetics*, came rather later with the appearance of a genre of prose narrative whose *mythoi* ('arrangements of events', plots) had no connection with institutionally sanctioned narrative structures (myths). This genre, which is often seen as the ancestor of the modern novel, was not even graced with a generic name by Hellenistic commentators (Perry 1967: 4-8), and one may suspect that this was as much due to the radical challenge posed by a genre which, as narrative, depended heavily on a *mythos* appealing to no other authority than the text itself, as to artistic inferiority or 'belatedness'. Secular narrative discourse had an initially similar scholastic reception when it reappeared in the later middle ages: the French *roman* and its cognates, applied today to the modern novel, at first disparagingly designated anything written in the vernacular, and only with the emancipation of narrative discourse became generic terms (Curtius 1953: 30-3). Similar connotations apply to the later English term 'novel', and related aspersions against the 'new' genre were frequent in the eighteenth century.

7. This makes myth the exact opposite of one theoretical aim of historiography. But Lévi-Strauss has shown that history, at least to the extent that it possesses any interest as narrative and/or as interpretation of the events it names, is also a product of this same mythic function (1966: 245-69).

But although the terms 'myth' and 'plot' have diverged almost beyond recall, 'myth' itself, however perceived, and literature continue to maintain a persistent, if elusive, relationship. One may trace the development of myth as an overt reference of modern literature back to the Romantic discovery of the necessity for and the availability of myth as content, replacing the neoclassical perception of *mythology* as form. Within literary discourse, myths and the more vaguely numinous sense of 'mythic', play an important and influential part in the English-language tradition during the first part of the twentieth century; and there is no need here to make more than passing reference to the mythical experiments, allusions and even aspirations of Yeats, Joyce, Eliot and Pound in the English-language tradition, or of Seferis, Tsirkas and Sinopoulos in the Greek (to name only writers in the latter tradition whose work explicitly acknowledges an intertextual relationship with the former).

But for all the prominence given by these writers, all acknowledged as influential and 'major' within their respective traditions, to myth, literary criticism's use of the concept has largely foundered on two famous formulations of the relationship between myth and text: that of Eliot in his brief review of Joyce's *Ulysses* in which myth is relegated to the status of method and at the same time proposed in seeming seriousness as the successor to the moribund genre of the novel;<sup>8</sup> and that of Northrop Frye, whose *Anatomy of Criticism*, with its sensitive appropriation of the Jungian concept of the mythical archetype remotely and numinously underlying all literary creativity, from a historical point of view seems to bring to a close the essentialist

8. Eliot 1970: 'Mr Joyce's parallel use of the *Odyssey* has . . . the importance of a scientific discovery . . . In using the myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him . . . It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history . . . Instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method'.

It should be noted that this formulation has been influential in Greek *poetry* criticism, but has not so far been discussed in relation to the novel. Seferis' choice of title 'Mythistorima' (Novel) for the first cycle of poems which he published after becoming acquainted with Eliot's poetry and ideas, seems to recognise the importance of the genre about which Eliot was writing. On the 'mythical method' in modern Greek poetry see Seferis 1974; Keeley 1976; Beaton 1983: 25-31 (on Cavafy); Keeley 1983 and Vayenas 1979: 147-55 (on Seferis); and Savvidis 1981 (on Seferis and Sinopoulos).

preoccupations with myth of an earlier generation of writers, a preoccupation which had in the beginning owed as much to Sir James Frazer and edenic anthropology as to Jung.<sup>9</sup>

From the perspective of anthropology, the serious study of myth was being revived by Claude Lévi-Strauss, on a structuralist basis derived from Saussure, at just the time when Frye was formulating his *Anatomy of Criticism*. All later studies of myth seem indebted to this model,<sup>10</sup> whose influence has more recently also been felt in the field of Greek anthropology.<sup>11</sup> Lévi-Strauss was at some pains, however, to distance his findings from the field of literature, arguing that mythical discourse possesses a temporal reversibility denied to other uses of language (apparently including literature) (1972: 209); that the ease with which myth is translated from one language to another places it at the opposite pole to that of poetry, often defined as language which *cannot* be translated (1972: 210; 1970: 18); and that the modern novel is 'born from the exhaustion of myth' as 'the deterioration ends at the point where reduplication replaces structure' (1978: 129-31).<sup>12</sup>

9. Frye 1957: 'In terms of narrative, myth is the imitation of actions near or at the conceivable limits of desire' (136). 'We thus have four narrative pregeneric elements of literature which I shall call *mythoi* or generic plots' (162).

The evaluation of the *Anatomy of Criticism* proposed is also that of Righter, in his commonsensical but generally discouraging survey of the role of myth in twentieth-century English and American literature and criticism: 'What we have in the *Anatomy* is a mythical structure devised for the explication of other mythical structures, bounded and defined by mythical limits . . . Certainly it has not marked a new stage in the development of myth criticism, but seems the last, and greatest, monument of a genre already well in decline . . .' (Righter 1975: 67, 79).

10. See especially: Barthes 1972; Maranda and Maranda 1971; Kirk 1970; Sperber 1975.

11. See Kyriakidou-Nestoros 1978; Herzfeld e.g. 1977, 1980; Beaton 1980; Alexiou 1983; Hirschon e.g. 1983.

12. The last of these points is answered by Gould (1981, see below). On the issue of translatability, this disappears as a problem if myth is seen not as a separate discourse but as a function determining discourse and analogous to plot in the literary text. Plots, or 'arrangements of events' are of course the elements of literature which are most *easily* translated across linguistic boundaries.

Further support for the identification of myth with plot as an organising function anterior to discourse, whether literary or not, can be seen in Lévi-Strauss' preface to Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss 1970. Here he concedes that 'the very notion of opposition [between myth and poetry] implies that the two forms were originally conceived of as complementary terms, forming part of the same classification' (1970: 202). The opposition is then re-stated in revealing terms: 'Each poetic work, considered in isolation, contains in itself its variables which can be represented on a vertical axis, since it is formed of superimposed levels: phonological, phonetic, syntac-

A recent study which attempts to bridge the gap between modern ideas on myth and structuralist and post-structuralist thinking on literature, is that by Eric Gould (1981), who in an eclectic manner draws freely on developments in several disciplines, and notably on the work of Barthes, Derrida, and Lacan. Gould's boldest stroke is to retain the notion of the archetype as the clue to the existence of myth, while depriving it of all but the traces of essentialism and neatly inscribing it in the space opened up by deconstruction theory between the signifier and signified, that highly metaphorical repository for the 'uncanny', the ghost of a cliché in the structuralist machine.

Taking a basis in Lévi-Strauss' Saussurean insistence that myth is language, albeit of a special sort, he develops it in a characteristically post-structuralist direction: 'since myth is language, it is a response to the conditions of language itself' (Gould 1981: 39). It is also a hermeneutic enterprise, as the mythical archetype 'is but a representation of experience resulting itself from the quite distinct intent to make an interpretation of the world' (33). At its most general, then, myth is 'the history of our inability to authenticate our knowledge of Being, and yet it is at the same time a history of our attempt to understand that inability' (10). These are all formulations with immediate echoes in structuralist and post-structuralist *literary* theory, and the main thrust of Gould's argument is to show that the special discourse of myth, as defined by Lévi-Strauss, is not so different after all from the equally special discourse of literature. 'Poetry and myth are, ontologically, complementary classes of discourse; both are definable in terms of language as sign interpretation and as language of the self' (Gould 1981: 116). And he concludes that far from fading out altogether in the modern novel, myth is actually strengthening its position within literature: 'Myth is not so much weakened as dissipated in the modern . . . It is abstracted

tic, prosodic, semantic, etc. On the other hand, the myth — at least in the extreme — can be interpreted only at the semantic level, the system of variables (always an indispensable part of structural analysis) being supplied by the multiplicity of versions of the same myth, that is to say, a cross-section through a body of myths at the semantic level only' (1970:202). What after all, is the semantic component of a literary narrative, divorced from the other variables listed, if not its *mythos*/plot in the Aristotelian sense?

to a sophistication that only literature can handle' (134). This general thesis is then supported in some detail by readings in Joyce, Eliot and Lawrence, all of them writers who at an explicit level show an interest in achieving just the kind of re-integration of myth into 'the modern' that Gould himself proposes, albeit within a different theoretical framework.

Gould avoids the kind of general hypothesis that I have set out here, restricting himself to mythical 'intentions'. It is clear in context, however, that these are the anthropomorphic 'intentions' of the text, and not of any author. He need not in principle therefore limit himself to texts in which an *authorial* 'mythical intention' can reasonably be deduced (such as those of Joyce, Eliot and Lawrence), and at times does seem to hint that even a novel which makes no clear reference to *myths* might yet be mythical:

... there is an essential logic to the plotting of good novels which lies not in mimetic faithfulness, but in the ordering of mythic form ... A novel can be said to have a mythic (and not simply a mythological) intent (a) because it is written within the novel's own mythology or genetic system, and (b) because whatever mythological motifs the novelist may use are just as effectively taken over by the novel, to the extent that (c) the intrasystemic functions of the plot can be said to keep alive mythic narrative in the modern. (Gould 1981: 138)

And in another passage there is a clear implication that myth in literature, in the sense in which it has been defined, has a specific *function*, one which bears an impressive relationship to explanations of the function of myth in society (such as Lévi-Strauss' explanation in functional terms of the Oedipus myth), as well as to the functioning of the plot within the literary text. It is not the re-use of mythical 'motifs' in a plot which makes the novel mythic, Gould states, 'but the logical intention of the plot to make the arbitrary coincidences of experience seem somehow coherent, to maintain compromise amid contradiction, even to create tautologies and full meaning (1981: 180).

Reduced to basics, then, Gould's thesis argues for both myth and literary narrative as hermeneutic systems based on language, at once generated by and striving to fill the gap between signifier and signified which in turn, according to Lacan, creates the gap

between consciousness and its object. The attempt to interpret by means of structure is common to both myth and literature, and in each case a discourse is generated which demands to be interpreted in its turn.

Further possibilities of convergence between myth and literature are touched on, without being developed explicitly, in structuralist and post-structuralist discourse in both fields. Thus the anthropologist Pierre Maranda, in a recent contribution to an anthology of reader-oriented literary criticism, explicitly extends to 'any "text"' his earlier characterization of myth: 'The life of myths consists in reorganizing traditional components in the face of new circumstances ... The mythic process is a learning device in which the unintelligible — randomness — is reduced to intelligibility — a pattern ...' (Maranda 1980: 192).

And in discourse on literature, some remarks in very different contexts on *iteration*, or recurrence, provide a suggestive answer to a question posed by Gould at the beginning of his study but not fully answered, the question 'of what makes myth mythic in the modern and of its relationship to literature' (Gould 1981: 6), or 'the reasons a narrative gives for its own necessity' (1981: 8).

First we have a series of hints in an essay by Laurent Jenny, on intertextuality: 'We grasp the meaning and structure of a literary work only through its relation to archetypes which are themselves abstracted from long series of texts of which they are, so to speak, the invariants ... The literary work's relation to these archetypal models is always one of realization, transformation, or transgression' (Jenny 1982: 34). That is, there are within literature, textual 'archetypes' whose only existence is in their (modified) recurrence, just as there are within myths 'archetypal' motifs which, whether or not they have any transcendental existence, are discernible to the psycho-analyst, the anthropologist or the lay reader as recurrences. Later Jenny writes, 'We propose to speak of intertextuality only when there can be found in a text elements exhibiting a structure created previous to the text, above the level of the lexeme, of course, but independently of that structure' (1982: 40). When, further, he states that 'Intertextuality speaks a language whose vocabulary is the sum of all existing texts' (1982: 45), he is very close to the language of Lévi-Strauss, and a few lines later the expected comparison between the intertextuality of literature and the *bricolage*

to which Lévi-Strauss had likened the myth-making process is made explicit. Intertextuality, so understood, is no mere contingent characteristic of literature, but, according to Jenny, is 'the defining condition of literary readability' (1982: 34). Taken together, these statements mean that ■ defining condition of literature is the existence of supra-textual recurrences, the creation of structure (and hence of meaning) out of elements *which concurrently form part of other pre-existing structures* (and bring with them an aura of meaning by virtue of that repetition). That is to say, at the level of literary discourse as a whole and not of the single text, that literary discourse is made both recognisable as such, and intelligible, by recurrences from one text to another, just as myth is most easily recognised by its recurrent use of a relatively restricted number of motifs or mythemes.<sup>13</sup>

The second discussion of recurrence which is relevant to our purposes is to be found in Gérard Genette's analysis of iterative narrative in Proust. Commenting on a passage of Proust's novel, Genette says: 'But most characteristic in this text, perhaps, is the idea (expressed by the narrator) that this custom, becoming "the favourite theme for conversations, for pleasantries, for anecdotes which can be embroidered . . . would have provided ■ nucleus, ready-made, for a legendary cycle, if any of us had had the epic mind" — the classic passage from ritual to explanatory or illustrative myth . . . The main point here is the spontaneously established link between narrative inspiration and repetitive event, that is, in one sense, the absence of event' (Genette 1980: 126).

Here we are dealing with recurrences not at the level of discourse but of story. Iterative narrative is that which narrates 'one time (or rather: at one time) what happened n times', that is, 'a single narrative utterance takes upon itself several occurrences together of the same event (in other words . . . several events considered only in terms of their analogy)' (Genette 1980: 116). The event which provides the impetus for narrative is not an event at all, as Genette says, but the common denominator, or basis for analogy, according to which actually different events are perceived as a recurrent series. A pattern of recurrence is recognised in events

13. See Propp 1972: 139; Lévi-Strauss 1972: 208: 'With myth, everything becomes possible. But on the other hand, this apparent arbitrariness is belied by the astounding similarity between myths collected in widely different regions'.

and that recognition stimulates, even necessitates, discourse. That myths, in the form of an epic, legendary cycle, as well as literature, in the form of his own text, may equally be brought into being by such a recognition, is Proust's own suggestion, merely glossed by Genette, and may go some way to accounting for the 'intoxication with the iterative' that Genette identifies in Proust's text (1980: 123).<sup>14</sup>

Finally, the crucial importance that iteration or recurrence may hold for the production of meaning in language, and hence for the making of myth no less than of literature, is succinctly summed up in a passage from Jonathan Culler's exposition of deconstruction theory, dealing with the debate among Austin, Derrida and Searle on the nature of speech acts. From this debate Culler extrapolates 'a principle of considerable breadth. Something can be a signifying sequence only if it is iterable, only if it can be repeated in various serious and non-serious contexts, cited and parodied. Imitation is not an accident that befalls an original but its condition of possibility . . . (for) features to be recognizable one must be able to isolate them as elements that could be repeated, and thus the iterability manifested in the inauthentic, the derivative, the imitative, the parodic, is what makes possible the original and the authentic' (Culler 1983: 120).

This part of the argument may now be summarised: Gould's far-reaching work of synthesis between the structural study of myth and post-structuralist theories of discourse can be supplemented by more tangential evidence for ■ convergence between the two disciplines (or discourses). Specifically, in addition to structure as the matrix for meaning in both literature and myth, these examples point to the importance of repetition, recurrence, or iteration, whether at the level of discourse; at the level of events-as-perceived, as a factor serving to generate discourse; or even at the most general level as a precondition for any signification.

It is time now to return to the hypothesis put forward earlier that plot in literature, as a mediating term between story and discourse, is identical to the mythic function. This will be illustrated by examination of four Greek novels, dating from the

14. Genette's theory of iterative narrative and its connotative possibilities are considerably extended by Georgia Farinou (1983), who persuasively relates it to ■ cyclical presentation of time in Papadimandis' narratives.



middle third of the twentieth century, in which myths, recognisable in their archaic institutional form as pre-literary narratives, are explicitly used as a means of achieving the *synthesis ton pragmaton*, or ordering of the events narrated, that makes of the novel in each case an intelligible discourse.

In each novel myth is present in four distinct ways, or attributes of the mythic function:

1) As the object of intertextual reference (with the proviso that what is referred to is not necessarily a single text or even a literary text). This may be termed the *referential* attribute.

2) As an organising principle in the transformation of story into discourse. The structure (that is, relationship between constitutive elements) of one or more existing myths, recognisable as such, and incorporating such inversions/transformations as mythical structure in fact permits, becomes a structural component of the text, governing the sequence and selection of events that constitutes the plot. This is the attribute of *technique*, and corresponds closely to the 'mythical method' as formulated by Eliot and exemplified in Joyce's *Ulysses*.

3) By means of *reference* and *technique* the text offers an *interpretation* of events in the non-linguistic world, through the subjugation of the contingency of story/events to the intelligible structure of the myth which organises the discourse. But because every re-articulation of a myth is simultaneously an attempt at *interpreting the myth* (cf. Sperber 1975: 50; Beaton 1980: 126; Gould 1981: 6), the text also offers an interpretation which is added to the myth as received, through the introduction of new contingent elements derived from the world of events. That is to say, discourse and story seek to interpret one another through their meeting point in the structural arrangement of events that precedes the full articulation of the text as discourse.

4) By means of *reference*, *technique* and this double *interpretation*, the text metaphorically extends the intelligible structure of its discourse to the contingent world to which, as interpretation, it refers, thereby claiming an intelligible structure for the contingent world of events and unmediated experience; while at the same time the *metaphorical* extension also works in the opposite direction, to reveal the discourse (as articulation of an intelligible structure) as itself a contingent event among others that constitute the non-textual world.

George Theotokas: *Argo*, (1933, 1936).

Theotokas' reference to myth in this novel is both more blatant and less pervasive than is Joyce's in *Ulysses*. It is also given a realist dimension, as 'Argo' is the name given in the novel to the real-life Athens students union, of which Theotokas had been president in the early 20s. This symbolic naming refers to a fact of everyday Greek life which at a commonplace level opens the door to myth without artifice upon the part of the novelist: shops and businesses in Greece are often named after an appropriate figure out of ancient mythology.<sup>15</sup> Theotokas does not, as Joyce does, tailor the events of Athens in the 20s to correspond to the details of Jason's story, but allows the myth of the voyage after legendary magical treasure to permeate the book and become the shaping force, in a tragic inversion of the myth of Jason, of the lives of all its major characters.

*Argo* is probably the most ambitious novel of the 30s in Greece, with a large cast of characters and panoramic portrayal of Athens during the previous decade, a period of disorientation after the Greek defeat in Asia Minor in 1922, and of continued political upheaval (cf. Mackridge 1972: 349-57). The novel tells the parallel stories of three brothers, Nikiforos, Alexis and Linos. All three, together with most of the other principal male characters, are driven by a demonic force which destroys them (metaphorically, the quest for the Golden Fleece). Nikiforos, ambitious to become a writer and talented as well, wastes his life in dissipation and a sterile entanglement with the wife of a hard-headed statesman. Alexis, the lonely poet who is too shy to declare his love for Morfo dies young after producing a slim volume of poems dedicated to her, and ironically entitled *Joy of Life*: these poems are posthumously hailed as great poetry and Alexis' demonic quest ends with success; but only at the cost of his own life. And the youngest brother Linos, urged by an adolescent version of the

15. This is already a very different kind of allusion to myth from that found in Gide's *Les Faux Monnayeurs*, in which *Argonauts*, by a conventional literary allusion of a kind which Gide seems to be parodying, is the name of a not-so-avantgarde literary journal, and by extension also refers to the coterie that produces it. The farcical episode of the 'Argonauts' Dinner' in that novel, in which real and fictional characters interact, may be an intentional object of further allusion by Theotokas, but has no bearing on the central reference to the myth of the Argonauts which determines the structure of *Argo* (Gide 1966: 239, 255-69).

same demonic power to discover sexuality prematurely, falls victim first to homosexual rape and then to violent death. Of the other principal characters, Pavlos Skinas is a harsh and ambitious man of power but also with genuine courage and devotion to his country. Sacrificing everything for power, he is finally defeated by the irruption of real history into the novel, as the real-life statesman Venizelos returns from exile to end the political turmoil of the decade. And Damianos Frantzis, perhaps the best drawn of Theotokas' characters, educated by a fanatical Orthodox priest in Constantinople, turns to equally fanatical communism after the Greek defeat of 1922 and the shattering of his former ideals, and ends by sacrificing his life in a vain attempt to assassinate Mussolini.

The novel is tragic in conclusion as well as in scope, and the sense of tragedy is heightened by the sustained use of the myth of the Argonauts. At one level, the younger characters, who are all members of the students' union called Argo, are collectively engaged on a voyage, a quest, which they only partially understand or can control. The voyage of the Argo in the novel is, in the widest sense, life itself on which these young characters are setting out. But as the representatives of a country and of an age, they also stand for Greece as it was in the 20s, setting out after defeat on a new quest for self-identity, in unknown and turbulent waters. In a more fundamental sense the myth of the Argonauts refers to and at the same time determines the fate of each of the major characters: each is driven by an uncontrollable inner force which Theotokas elsewhere called the *daimonio*,<sup>16</sup> impelled on a quest for something magical and elusive, a half-understood purpose of life. This *daimonio* compels them to re-enact in their lives the pattern of the ancient myth, to repeat Jason's mythical quest in the contemporary world, where it is subverted by history. Time, which is absent from the endlessly repeatable world of myth as paradigmatic story, undermines the characters and their actions — they grow old and lose their visions, like Nikiforos and Skinas, or they die young like Alexis and Linos. In the case of Skinas history interposes literally to thwart his ambitions in the historical person of Venizelos. The role that the myth has played in shaping the novel and the destinies of the characters is spelt out near

16. See Theotokas 1973: 28-34. Το Δαίμονιο is the title of Theotokas' second novel.

the end as the elderly and disillusioned Skinas tells his young son the story of Jason and the Argonauts as a fairy tale. The child wants to know what happened after the end of the story:

- Afterwards the Argo went on making voyages — Jason's children went on voyaging in her.
- And do they still go, dad?
- They do, and never know where it is they're going.
- And who are these children?
- They're a nation, said Pavlos Skinas with a smile, that strange and legendary nation of the Greeks.
- The boy remained thoughtful for a little.
- And what do they do, the ones who go? he asked again.
- Some of them find something, others come back empty-handed, others don't come back ever . . .
- They were silent again for a minute or two.
- Did you go with the Argo, dad? the boy asked.
- I did.
- And what did you find?
- Nothing! replied Pavlos Skinas softly.

(Theotokas 1936: 174-5)

Kosmas Politis: *Eroica*.

*Eroica*, first published in 1937, is a highly self-conscious novel, full of literary and other cultural allusions, references to Joyce among them.<sup>17</sup> If Theotokas chose a myth which is antithetical to that of *Ulysses* in one of direction (that of the Argonauts) Politis chose another which is similarly antithetical in a different way: the myth of the *Iliad*. *Eroica* covers a period of six weeks in the lives of a group of boys growing up in a town at once cosmopolitan and provincial, a fictional amalgam of his native Smyrna with Patras where he lived for much of his later life. The boys, at the turning point between childhood and adolescence, are engaged in mock-heroic games, (seemingly inspired by the gangster-heroism of the firemen of Smyrna at the turn of the century), and maintain a perpetual feud with the boys of the local Catholic school, especially 'Papakokaki', who, although his parents are Greek is sent for snobbish reasons to the 'European' school. The heroic games and feuds are harmless and innocent until one day Loizos, the leader of the boys, and Alekos, the most

17. Text = Politis 1983. For detailed analysis of allusions, irony, symbolism and fictionality in this novel see Mackridge 1979; 1983.

sensitive among them, meet Monica, the daughter of the Italian consul, and while they are taken up with their first clumsy experience of sexual flirtation, another of the group, the leader's special favourite, is hurt in a 'battle' with Papakokaki and soon afterwards dies as a result of his injury. The parallel between Loizos (the leader) and Achilles, and between the dead comrade and Patroclus, in this opening episode is heightened when 'mock-heroic' funeral games are held in the railway siding (Politis 1983: 72-81); and the elusive female figure of Loizos' dreams, that at once fascinates and repels him, is visualised by the narrator in terms that partially equate her with what the boys see in Monica: 'Only then did we feel the meaning of the words of the elders [in the *Iliad*] as Helen went past. It would be worth enduring pain for such a woman' (Politis 1983: 31).<sup>18</sup> More important for the purposes of *Eroica*, however, is that Achilles' absence from the battlefield, which led to Patroclus' death, was the result of a quarrel over a *woman* (Briseis), that is, of the irruption of sexuality into an 'innocent' world of all-male heroic conduct, and this episode in the *Iliad* is only a reflection, in microcosm, of the cause, according to the myth, of the entire war (the abduction of Helen). In the same way, in the novel, Loizos blames himself for his comrade's death, because he was flirting with a woman when his comrade received his injury; and right from the beginning of the novel the heroic world of childhood is opposed to the awakened sexuality of the adolescent.

At the end of the novel the boys have been awakened, by vicarious experience of death and sexuality, into adolescence, and already are cut off from their old pastimes, which now seem silly and futile. All except Alekos, for whom, now that the innocence of childhood has been lost, the old game of heroics becomes deadly. Carried away by passionate hatred of the arch-enemy of their childhood feuds, he burns down the house of Papakokaki's family in earnest; makes violent love to Monica in the garden before being shot dead by her brother (by mistake for a ginger tomcat!) as he tries to climb back over the wall.

18. Cf. Politis' interview with Robert Levesque (= 1983, 207-8): 'Yes, one could recognise the heroes of the *Iliad* in *Eroica*, as if in miniature. Loizos is Achilles: he weeps alone . . . Each of my boys — without this having been premeditated — is infused, in his language and his gestures, with epic recollections'.

There is much here that has nothing to do with the *Iliad*, and it would be unwise to push the mythical analogy too far in this case. But the boys are quite specifically associated with the Achaean heroes (one should not forget that Patras, evoked in the setting of the novel, is the capital of the modern-day Achaia) and the unfortunate Papakokaki, unheroic though he is, stands in the same relation to the novel's young heroes as do the Trojans to the Greek heroes in the *Iliad*. The end of the novel can be seen to allude to the end of the *myth* (and here the non-equivalence between myth and text is apparent), which is always present throughout the *Iliad* but does not form part of its main narrative: the burning of Troy and the recapture of Helen. With the end of the myth of the Trojan war, the 'heroic' world in which the whole of the *Iliad* moves comes to an end. Politis' novel, with its parallel use of the *Iliad*-myth re-interprets the *Iliad* as a parable, as a nostalgic but also critical backward look by western man only recently awakened into his historical adolescence, compared to which the present age would correspond to his maturity. Through the prism of the *Iliad* the novel looks back at the childhood 'heroic' state with nostalgia certainly, but also with irony, with full awareness of the absurdity of heroic 'innocence', be it that of the Homeric 'heroic age' of western man, or of the 'heroic age' of a group of boys of Politis' own generation.

Nikos Kazantzakis: *Christ Recrucified*.

Set in a Greek village in the interior of Anatolia shortly before the Greek defeat of 1922, the novel tells of the arrival of a group of refugees from the fighting, while the younger people of the village are preparing themselves to act their parts in the village Passion play the following Easter. Under pressure of these events, the principal characters among the villagers become more and more identified with, or even taken over by, the roles of the Gospel characters they are to represent. This goes even beyond the 'realistic' motivation of the coming Passion play and extends to *all* the characters: the village elders unconsciously come to act the role of the Pharisees; Grigoris, the village priest, is imperceptibly edged by circumstances and temperament into the role of Caiaphas; the role of Pilate is unwittingly played to perfection, and with great humour on Kazantzakis' part, by the local Turkish

*aga*, a good-natured easy-going pederast who ends by being driven to distraction by the incomprehensible antics of the Greeks around him, who, he says, 'would put horseshoes onto fleas'. The novel ends with Manolios, the Christ-figure, put to death in church at midnight on Christmas morning, as news arrives that Turkish troops are on the way to the village: it is the eve of the Asia Minor disaster and the expulsion of the Greek population from Anatolia (Kazantzakis 1954).

The overall mythical structure of *Christ Recrucified* is plain to see. But Kazantzakis has achieved something much subtler, and given a more far-reaching interpretative and metaphorical dimension to the subject matter of his novel, than at first sight appears. First of all, there is an important inversion: Manolios is appointed to play the part of Christ, that is, is born *as* Christ, at Easter; and he is ritually murdered in church on *Christmas* day, when according to the myth the *birth* of Christ should be celebrated. This inversion signifies both the distortion of Christianity as practised in a present-day Christian community, but more important the novel's questioning, or indeed inversion, of the central element of the Gospel story, namely the Resurrection, for which the repetition of endless and purposeless re-enactment is substituted.

The other important complexity that Kazantzakis introduces into his parallel use of the Gospel story with present-day, ostensibly 'realistic' narrative, concerns the relation of myth to history. The Gospel story itself partakes of both history and myth, since the story of Jesus takes place against a historically verifiable background. Kazantzakis plays on both the mythical and historical dimensions in his novel. The story of Jesus in the Bible is set against the aspirations of the Jews at that time for independence from the Roman Empire, aspirations which ended disastrously in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem. By setting his novel in Asia Minor shortly before the catastrophe of 1922 Kazantzakis is able to imply the historically similar fates of the Jews in antiquity and the Greeks in the twentieth century, and so to imply equally for both a causal link with the 'betrayal' of Christ.

But there is a further historical dimension to *Christ Recrucified*. There are many references to bolshevism in the novel, and the refugees encamped outside the village, who apply in vain to the villagers for help and finally, when none is forthcoming, take

up the offensive, are branded by both villagers and Turks as bolsheviks. The clash between communism and the established order is realistically intelligible, since the novel is set shortly after the Russian Revolution; but actually has far more to do with the conflict which was in its final stages while Kazantzakis was writing the novel: the Greek civil war.<sup>19</sup> The struggle between the haves of Lycovrissi and the have-nots encamped on the mountain outside is not only a parable of Christian hypocrisy and Christian fanaticism respectively, but at the same time of the real, and contemporary, conflict between Greeks and Greeks; between the haves settled in the towns, and the revolutionaries, the *andartes*, in the mountains. So Manolios, the Christ-figure, becomes not just a saint but also a social revolutionary, and the leader of the refugees, the gunpowder priest Fotis, combines the characteristics, and some of the beliefs, of the traditional Orthodox ascetic with those of the fiery revolutionary leader.

In *Christ Recrucified* explicit allusion to myth does not only provide a structure for the novel's plot, but also by metaphorical reflection back into the world of events, links in parallel three separate historical epochs — Judaea at the time of the Passion, the Greeks in Asia Minor on the eve of their mass expulsion in 1922-3, and the Greek civil war of 1944-9, aligning them respectively with three ideologies or systems of belief: Christianity, the nationalism of the *Megali Idea* that lay at the root of the 1922 disaster, and Communism. In this way, when the Christ-figure is killed and Turkish soldiers are due to arrive in the village: 1) Christianity is defeated in the modern world by the forces of self-interest, greed and fear, 2) the Greek ideal of the early years of the twentieth century is defeated as the Greek army is beaten in Anatolia and the Greeks of Asia Minor are about to become refugees like the Jews of antiquity; 3) Communism is defeated in the final stages of the Greek civil war, contemporary with the writing of the novel: the rebels from the mountain with their passionate and desperate conviction of the brotherhood of man are driven to attack their well-fed compatriots down in the village

19. *Christ Recrucified* was written in 1948-9. The relevance of the Greek civil war of 1944-9 for the novel has been demonstrated by Peter Bien in an unpublished lecture given at the University of Birmingham in 1979. I am grateful to Professor Bien for permission to refer to his work in advance of its publication (Bien, forthcoming).

and are routed. The adoption of a recurrent structure linking different myths, both received and in the making, enables the death of Manolios/Christ to stand as a symbol for all three defeats, as it also hints at an underlying identity among three distinct or even irreconcilable ideologies: Christianity, nationalist irredentism, and Communism.

Stratis Tsirkas: *Drifting Cities*

The novels comprising Tsirkas' trilogy, *Ακυβέρνητες Πολιτείες*, were published between 1960 and 1965. Tsirkas had been born and brought up in the Greek community of Alexandria, and the novels span the period from 1942 to 1944, the time of the German occupation in Greece, when the Greek government in exile had its seat in Egypt, and the Middle East was the scene of turmoil and ideological machinations that later were to plunge Greece into civil war. Tsirkas writes as a Marxist, but from this fact immediately stems one of the ambiguities or contradictions that gives the novels their energy. The central character, Manos Simonidis, is a Marxist Hamlet, unable to decide most of the time between thought and action, intellectually convinced of the justice of the Marxist cause, but emotionally profoundly attracted to the 'high culture' that in the world of the novel is represented by English aristocrats and classical scholars. As he puts it at the end of the first novel, *The Club*, Manos sees no hope for the future in the people he loves and with whom he feels a bond of kinship.<sup>20</sup>

The dilemma between Marxism and traditional 'high culture', especially the tendency to idealise the ancient past, does not merely dominate the thoughts of the principal character in the novels. It is also reflected in a fundamental way in the organisation of the trilogy, in which quite deliberately a Marxist view of history is superimposed on the structure of an ancient myth, a different one in each of the three novels. The Marxist perception of history is fully evident in Tsirkas' later comment: 'Since you're going to take [your characters] from the contemporary environment, and since you'll have decided to set them moving in a specific

20. 'While the fortunes of Humanity were taken as of right into their own hands by the Little Men, people like Nancy, Richards and Ron, repositories of a higher cultural life, could find nothing better to do than hit the bottle' (Tsirkas 1960: 175).

political period of time, inevitably in describing their adventures you will also portray the antifascist struggle' (Tsirkas 1973: 12). But this orthodox Marxism is everywhere set against a very different principle that plays an equally prominent role in the organisation of the world within the novels, and so by the operation of metaphor also of the world of which they tell: namely the pattern of ancient myths, perceived as cyclical and timeless.

*The Club*, set in Jerusalem, holy city of Christians and Jews, is organised at various levels around the myth of the Fall of Man (Tsirkas 1960).<sup>21</sup> Set in a seedy boarding house, symbolically near the station and haunted by the sound of trains, but cut off by telephone from the outside world, it gives an entirely realistic picture of the rootless lives of refugees, spies and soldiers in a foreign country at a time when Allied defeat at the crucial battle of El Alamein was daily expected. But its mythical structure becomes evident in the fallen state that all of these characters share: the German Jewess who runs the boarding house, still dreaming of her former grandeur in Frankfurt, Manos' communist rival who is always called only the *Little Man*, degenerate in the sense of being a coarse, insensitive hard-line ideologue, and above all Colonel Winters of British Intelligence who in addition to running a sinister, and of course anti-communist intelligence network, also heads a more depraved unofficial organisation, the Club of the title — a group of people whose lives have become inextricably linked and are manipulated by Winters in the interests of a cynical experiment with human nature. The myth of the Fall, in this fallen city, is acted out in the central story of Emmy Bobretsberg, a well-to-do Austrian refugee who lets herself in for an improbably debauched relationship with one Adam, a sensualist and blackmarketeer, but also a brutish incarnation of Man at his most primitive: a modern version of the Adam in Genesis.

The second novel of the trilogy, *Ariagni* (Tsirkas 1962), betrays its mythical organisation quite openly: the title alludes to a known variant of the name of Ariadne in the myth of the Labyrinth, which has been connected with *agne* (holy). The character's Naxian origin may further allude to the myths surrounding her

21. I am indebted in this part to the excellent formalist study of Tsirkas' trilogy by Daniel Bleau(?) (1980).



death, linked by the scholarship of the time with cyclical regeneration (Nilsson 1927: 451-6). In the novel, set this time in Cairo, Ariagni is the name of the mother-figure who holds the key to the labyrinth in two senses: literally the Arab quarter of Cairo which Greeks and British alike ignore and despise at their peril, and metaphorically the labyrinth of intrigue that surrounds the main characters. Thanks to Ariagni, Manos survives to extricate himself, for the time being, from the political labyrinth. And the novel ends with an allusion to the capacity of myth for renewal and repetition at different times and in different environments, as Ariagni listens to an Arab version of the tale of Theseus, in which the hero is Sinbad and the labyrinth in a cave in (of course!) England.

The third novel, *The Bat* (Tsirkas 1965), has much the most complex mythical structure. The 'drifting city' of this novel is Tsirkas' native Alexandria, and we are now in 1944, the time of the abortive left-wing mutiny among the Greek troops stationed in Egypt. The key to the complex events in the novel is to be found in the boarding house on the seafront at Alexandria called *O Proteas* (Proteus). (This is the same 'realistic' device for introducing a mythical reference as we found in Theotokas' *Argo*: Greek hotels and boarding houses are very commonly named after mythological figures with local associations, as of course Proteus has with the harbour of Alexandria.) The myth of Proteus is present as an organising principle in the novel in three ways. First, in the character of the elusive, fake cripple called variously Brooks or Parker who runs the boarding house, and turns out to be the evil genius of British intelligence in Alexandria: this single character comes to stand for the enemy that always thwarts the aims of the novel's principal characters and whom they try in vain to pin down. Secondly, one of the characters in the novel draws attention to the fact that the myth of Peleus and Thetis is a variant of that of Proteus: Thetis was the elusive loved one changing shape until captured by violence to give birth to Achilles (Tsirkas 1965: 43-4; cf. Bleau 1980: 16). This variant of the myth lies at the heart of the various escapades in the novel involving a girl in bat-costume, that significantly give the novel its title, and this in turn leads to the third way in which the myth is used. By extension, the elusive, Protean female figure disguised as a bat, who reappears across three generations in the story and comes

to represent symbolically a lost childhood and love, surely suggests the elusive goal of all the main characters of the novel: love and freedom. The Protean symbol in the novel stands at once for the freedom and love that Manos and his friends so deeply desire, but at the same time also for the sinister, invisible forces that implacably thwart that desire.

### Conclusion

The overt presence of myth at the level of reference, technique, interpretation and metaphor in no less than four novels, occupying a position of prominence and (at least relative) prestige within the tradition of the Modern Greek novel, is a remarkable fact in itself, and can be contrasted, for instance, with the isolation of Joyce's *Ulysses* as a major prose text in the English-language tradition. Historically this can be related to the continuity of tradition represented by the Greek language, within which the institutional myths of antiquity can still claim a certain local status (hence the 'realistic' motivation that provides an alibi for many of the mythical references discussed — a students' union called 'Argo', a hostelry in Alexandria named after Proteus).

But the very fact that it was possible for these writers to draw on this resource, and with much smaller disruption of the generic conventions (of the modern, but not especially modernist, novel) within which they did so, reveals the possibility that what they were doing was, in the best sense, nothing new. The four attributes of the mythic function that I have identified in these novels are arguably common to all narrative discourse in literature; it is just that we are not accustomed to think of them as mythical. 'Reference' here is merely a special case of intertextuality, the 'repetition' or 'iteration' common to both myth and literature, with the difference only that the referent belongs not to a text (or not only to a text) but specifically to the 'discourse' of myth. The technique, roughly Eliot's 'mythical method', of using a recognisable myth to form the plot of a novel (Aristotle's *synthesis ton pragmaton*), is only different from the construction of all narrative plots in that its framework is openly avowed as mythical. And the extent to which all of these texts establish themselves as interpretative discourse and as metaphorical figures relating back on the contingent world whose elements have been

organised into their plots, is not substantially affected by the status of these plots as (reinterpreted) myths, but only more evidently revealed.

Eliot claimed in his review of *Ulysses* that the 'mythical method' would one day supersede the novel. It required the experiment of *Ulysses*, and still more the experiments of Theotokas, Politis, Kazantzakis and Tsirkas, drawing on the resource of ancient myth as institutionalised discourse, both distinctive and ready-to-hand in their culture, to show that the mythic function has probably always been central to narrative discourse in literature.

King's College London

#### References

All citations are to the editions used, which in general are the most recent. Dates of first publication (where appropriate, in the original language) are given in brackets.

- Alexiou, M. 1983. 'Sons, wives and mothers: reality and fantasy in some Modern Greek ballads', *JMGS* 1, 73-111.
- Barthes, R. 1972. *Mythologies* (1957) (London).
- Beaton, R.M. 1980. *Folk poetry of modern Greece* (Cambridge).
- Beaton, R.M. 1983. '[C.P. Cavafy:] The history man', *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 10, 23-44.
- Bien, P. forthcoming. *Kazantzakis and politics*.
- Bleau(?), d. 1980. (Μπλο, Ντ.) Χρονικές δομές στις Ακυβέρνητες Πολιτείες (Athens).
- Chatman, S. 1978. *Story and discourse: narrative structure in fiction and film* (Ithaca and London).
- Culler, J. 1983. *On deconstruction: theory and criticism after structuralism* (London).
- Curtius, E.R. 1953. *European literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (1948) (London).
- Dundes, A. 1978. 'Structuralism and folklore', in A. Dundes, *Essays in Folkloristics*, 178-206 (New Delhi) (= *Studia Fennica* 20 (1976), 75-93).
- Eliot, T.S. 1970. 'Ulysses, order and myth' (1923), in R. Deming (ed.) *James Joyce, the Critical Heritage*, Vol. 1, 268-71 (London).
- Else, G. 1963. *Aristotle's Poetics: the argument* (Cambridge, Mass.).
- Farinou, G. 1983. *Narrative technique in Papadiamandis' fiction, 1887-1910* (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London).
- Frye, N. 1957. *Anatomy of criticism* (Princeton).
- Genette, G. 1980. *Narrative discourse* (1972) (Oxford).
- Gide, A. 1966. *The counterfeiters* (1925) (Harmondsworth).
- Gould, E. 1981. *Mythical intentions in modern literature* (Princeton).
- Herzfeld, M. 1977. 'Ritual and textual structures: the advent of spring in rural Greece', in R.K. Jain (ed.) *Text and Content*, 29-50 (Philadelphia).
- Herzfeld, M. 1980. 'Social borderers: themes of ambiguity and conflict in Greek folk-song', *BMGS* 6, 61-80.
- Hirschon, R.B. 1983. 'Women, the aged and religious activity: oppositions and complementarity in an urban locality', *JMGS* 1, 113-29.

- Jakobson, R. and Lévi-Strauss, C. 1970. 'Charles Baudelaire's "Les Chats"', (1962) in M. Lane (ed.), *Structuralism: a Reader*, 202-21 (London).
- Jenny, L. 1982. 'The strategy of form' (1976), in T. Todorov (ed.), *French Literary Theory Today*, 34-63 (Cambridge and Paris).
- Kazantzakis, N. 1954. Ο Χριστός Ξανασταυρώνεται (Athens).
- Keeley, E. 1976. *Cavafy's Alexandria: study of a myth in progress* (Cambridge, Mass.).
- Keeley, E. 1983. 'Seferis and the "mythical method"', (1969), and Addendum, in E. Keeley, *Modern Greek Poetry*, 68-94 (Princeton).
- Kirk, G.S. 1970. *Myth: its meaning and function in ancient and other cultures* (London).
- Kyriakidou-Nestoros, A. 1978. Η θεωρία της ελληνικής λαογραφίας (Athens).
- Lévi-Strauss, C. 1966. *The savage mind* (1962) (London).
- Lévi-Strauss, C. 1970. *The raw and the cooked* (1964) (London).
- Lévi-Strauss, C. 1972. 'The structural study of myth' (1955), in *Structural Anthropology*, 206-31 (Harmondsworth).
- Lévi-Strauss, C. 1978. *The origin of table manners* (1968) (New York).
- Mackridge, P. 1972. *The development of the Greek novel 1922-1940* (Unpublished D Phil thesis, University of Oxford).
- Mackridge, P. 1979. 'Symbolism and irony in three novels by Kosmas Politis', *BMGS* 5, 77-93.
- Mackridge, P. 1983. Συμβολικές και ειρωνικές δομές στην *Eroica*, Introduction, in Politis 1983 (Athens).
- Maranda, E.K. and Maranda, P. 1971. *Structural models in folklore and transformational essays* (The Hague and Paris).
- Maranda, P. 1980. 'The dialectic of metaphor: an anthropological essay on hermeneutics', in S. Suleiman and I. Crosman (eds.), *The Reader in the Text*, 183-204 (Princeton).
- Nilsson, M.P. 1927. *The Minoan-Mycenaean religion and its survival in Greek religion* (Lund).
- Perry, B.E. 1967. *The ancient romances: a literary-historical account of their origins* (Berkeley and Los Angeles).
- Politis, K. 1983. *Eroica* (1937) (Athens).
- Propp, V. 1972. 'Transformations in fairy tales' (1928), in P. Maranda (ed.), *Mythology*, 139-50 (Harmondsworth).
- Righter, W. 1975. *Myth and literature* (London).
- Savvidis, G.P. 1981. Μεταμορφώσεις του Ελπίνορα (Athens).
- Seferis, G. 1974. Κ.Π. Καβάφης, Θ.Σ. Έλιот, παράλληλοι (1947), in Δοκμές, Vol. 324-63 (Athens).
- Sperber, D. 1975. *Rethinking symbolism* (Cambridge).
- Theotokas, G. 1933, 1936. Αργώ Vols. 1 and 2 (Athens).
- Theotokas, G. 1973. Ελεύθερο πνεύμα (1929) (Athens).
- Tsirkas, S. 1960. Η λέσχη (Athens).
- Tsirkas, S. 1962. Αριάγνη (Athens).
- Tsirkas, S. 1965. Η νυχτερίδα (Athens).
- Tsirkas, S. 1973. Τα ημερολόγια της Τριλογίας (Athens).
- Vayenas, N. 1979. Ο ποιητής και ο χορευτής (Athens).

# Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Conceptions of Gender\*

CATIA S. GALATARIOTOU

## I

Byzantine women's history, Byzantine attitudes towards women and men, Byzantine conceptions of gender: that these are all areas still awaiting their researcher is a fact both obvious and well known. It is not my intention to reiterate here the problems connected with the enormous task of undertaking research in women's history in general and Byzantine women's history in particular. Such problems are well known to those interested in the subject and have already been partly pointed out in terms of suggested 'avenues of approach' and possible areas of research.<sup>1</sup> It is my intention, however, to take up one of these suggestions, develop and apply it to Byzantine source material. The suggestion comes

\* A number of the ideas which appear in this paper were generated and fuelled by discussions at meetings of the 'Women in Pre-Industrial Societies' group of the years 1982-3 and 1983-4, held in the Centre for Byzantine Studies and Modern Greek at Birmingham University. I am deeply grateful to all the women who participated in them. I would also like to thank Prof. A.A.M. Bryer, Drs. John Haldon, Chris Wickham and Margaret Alexiou for reading an earlier draft of this paper and providing constructive criticism and valuable suggestions.

1. See J. Herrin, 'In Search of Byzantine Women: Three Avenues of Approach', in *Images of Women in Antiquity*, ed. A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (London and Canberra 1983) 167-90; J. Grosdidier de Matons, 'La Femme dans l'Empire Byzantin', in *Histoire Mondiale de la Femme*, ed. P. Grimal, III (Paris 1967) 11-43, esp. 12; E. Patlagean, 'L'histoire de la femme déguisée en moine et l'évolution de la sainteté féminine à Byzance', *Studi Medievali* 3<sup>ser.</sup>, 17 (Spoleto 1976) 597-623, esp. 623 (reprinted in E. Patlagean, *Structure Sociale, Famille, Chrétienté à Byzance* (Variorum Reprints, London 1981) XI).

from Patlagean. At the end of her study of female transvestite saints, she calls for 'un dernier niveau d'analyse, celui de l'inconscient signifié en catégories culturelles'. She hopes 'qu'une telle étude attire des explorateurs, qui devront être des pionniers' and she concludes: 'Nous savons bien que l'ordonnance des sexes, élaborée sur la base limitée et monotone de quelques données naturelles, est une des constructions les plus sophistiquées et les plus significatives à la fois de toute culture'. It is aspects of such a construction that the pages that follow attempt to deconstruct, analyse, understand.

Persons are born of the male or female sex, but the cultural context into which they are born defines their sex in particular ways, denoting attributes, attitudes, characteristics, as 'naturally' appertaining to each sex — all of which amounts to what is socially recognised as 'masculine' and 'feminine'. Sex is a biological fact; gender, a cultural phenomenon. I shall be using the term 'gender' to denote such a cultural definition of sex, reserving 'sex' as a term of biological connotation.<sup>2</sup> I believe the gender system to be a fundamental category of social-historical analysis, because it is only through taking account of the role of gender that we begin to understand the full elaborations and mechanisms of power, the complexity of human motivation, the interdependence of social groupings (family, class, community, society), the economic, political, ideological forces at work in any given community. I do not believe that within this context the role of gender can replace that of class, but I consider it to be crucially important in our understanding that social systems are historically and not biologically determined, that they are man-made and not God-sent.

In the course of this paper I shall be using the term 'patriarchy' to describe a system of social order in which power and the means of acquiring and perpetuating it (economic, political, ideological) have been assumed by the male sex.<sup>3</sup> It is, however, pointless to

2. See A. Oakley, *Sex, Gender and Society* (London 1972) esp. 158-72.

3. There have been many attempts to provide a comprehensive definition of patriarchy, from seeing it as a purely economic system of subordination, to describing it as a fundamentally ideological structure. See respectively F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (New York 1972); J. Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (Harmondsworth 1975) esp. 412. Between these two extreme positions other writers have sought more comprehensive definitions. See

lump together under a general rubric of 'patriarchy' all forms of male dominance, for it is as varied and elaborate as the forces at play within each historic moment. As Fox-Genovese put it: 'It is fruitless to look for a uniform oppression of women, or a universal form of male dominance. But it is necessary to search out and analyse the allocation of roles and identities between the genders in order to understand the dynamics of any social system'.<sup>4</sup> Trying to avoid fruitless generalisations, then, I will focus my enquiry on one specific Byzantine source, a seemingly unlikely subject for gender analysis: the twelfth century Cypriot holy man, Neophytos the Recluse (1134- after 1214).

Neophytos, founder of the monastery of the Enkleistra near Paphos in Cyprus, filled many of his long hours of seclusion by writing.<sup>5</sup> Based on his surviving works, the following pages aim to describe and analyse his conception of gender. More specifically, and because of the limitation of space, I shall be examining only one area of Neophytos' conception, namely the forms which the female sex assumes in his writings.<sup>6</sup>

especially H. Hartmann, 'The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union', in *The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, ed. L. Sargent (London 1981) 1-41, esp. 14-19; S. Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex* (London 1979); M. Janssen-Jurreit, *Sexism. The Male Monopoly on History and Thought* (London 1982) esp. 329 ff; K. Millet, *Sexual Politics* (London 1977) esp. 23-58. Perhaps the definition which best succeeds in being both comprehensive and precise is the one formulated by C. Kaplan and expanded by D. Spender. Kaplan defines patriarchy as an order characterised by male dominance and the means — both actual and symbolic — of perpetuating that dominance. Spender adds to this her definition of 'sexism' as a term denoting particular manifestations of the order defined by Kaplan, so that examples of bias in favour of males — in language, for instance — is sexism. See D. Spender, *Man Made Language* (London, Boston and Henley 1980) 15.

4. E. Fox-Genovese, 'Placing Women's History in History', *New Left Review* 133 (June-July 1982) 5-29, esp. 15, 14-20.

5. On the life and writings of Neophytos see L. Petit, 'Vie et Ouvrages de Néophyte le Reclus', *EO* 2 (1898-9) 257-68, 372; I.P. Tsiknopoullos, *Τό Συγγραφικόν ἔργον τοῦ Ἁγίου Νεοφύτου, Κυπριακοῦ Σπουδαίου* 22 (1958) 67-214; C. Mango and E.J. Hawkins, 'The Hermitage of Saint Neophytos and its Wall Paintings', *DOP* 20 (1966) 121-206, esp. 122-9; D. Stiernon, 'Néophyte le Reclus', in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, fasc. LXXII-LXXIII (Paris 1981) 99-110.

6. I will be dealing at greater length with the ways in which language and imagery are used in Neophytos to convey 'male' and 'female' characteristics, and with the social significance of the relative status of the sexes, in my Ph.D. thesis, 'Neophytos the Recluse: A Cultural Study of a Byzantine Holy Man', esp. in the sections 'Woman made Female' and 'Ἀνδρας and all his Attributes', and the chapters on Family and Sexuality.

Through these many and varied forms I hope it will be seen that Neophytos' conception of the female sex remained always structured according to patriarchal prescription. That this should be so is not surprising. The small peasant community into which Neophytos was born and raised, the wider Byzantine world and social ideology permeating human relations, the particular christian monastic ideology to which Neophytos chose to adhere, all had deep, complex, well established roots in, and were expressions and reproductions of, a patriarchal social system. As such, Neophytos is both a product of the social reality of the culture of which he was a part and, through his own writings and actions, an agent of the culture which produced this reality.<sup>7</sup>

It must be noted in addition that power is always exercised in relation to a series of objectives. But as Foucault has pointed out, particular individuals who exercise power in a given situation may not necessarily be aware of the direction of their power, nor that their actions, whether deliberate or spontaneous, constitute a step further in the realisation of the general objectives of power.<sup>8</sup> This is so partly because of the way ideology, as both beliefs and as practice, functions by means of association and evocation. These not only affect but indeed produce related patterns of behaviour on the part of the individual. Yet man, 'an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun'<sup>9</sup> is most

7. This is not the place to enter into a debate as to the possible permutations of terms such as 'culture', 'ideology', 'reality', 'symbolism'. However, a brief definition of some of these terms for the purpose of this essay will be useful. I understand 'culture' in the way best expressed by C. Geertz, 'not as complexes of concrete behaviour patterns — customs, usages, traditions, habit clusters (. . .) — but as a set of control mechanisms — plans, recipes, rules, instructions (what computer engineers call "programs") for this governing of behavior': C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London 1975) esp. 44, 3-54. 'Ideology' I use in the sense of a set of beliefs and practises, generated through contradictions within the specific culture of which the ideology is part. Ideological consciousness functions by presenting these contradictions as non-contradictory, as 'natural'. See generally J. Larraín, *The Concept of Ideology* (London 1979); *idem*, *Marxism and Ideology* (London 1983); but especially T. Lovell, *Pictures of Reality. Aesthetics, Politics, Pleasure*. (London 1980) esp. 22 ff., 47-63; J.F. Haldon, 'Ideology and Social Change in the Seventh Century: Military Discontent as a Barometer', *Klio* (1985, forthcoming) (I am grateful to the latter for showing me this article in advance of publication). I understand 'reality' as being essentially a product of culture. See P. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Harmondsworth 1967).

8. M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 1 (London 1979) 81-102, esp. 94-95.

9. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 5

often unaware of these 'webs', which constitute his culture and form the basis of the power of the ruling class and the gender interests in it.

This must be born in mind throughout the reading of the following pages, lest the reader assume that I 'charge' Neophytos with conscious and deliberate expressions of a desire to maintain women in the role of the 'second sex'; or that I imply that he fully realised the workings and functions of patriarchy and was a willing and conscious participant in its game. Far from it. The whole system of gender classification and power, as evidenced in Neophytos' writings, functioned in extremely complex and covert ways. It referred to a strikingly resilient form of social organisation, which, partly because of its longevity, had developed symbols and signs which by Neophytos' time were already, as Patlagean points out, embedded in the unconscious. What were cultural constructions, types, categories, devices, had become sufficiently absorbed to be considered natural, biological characteristics. The occasions, therefore, in which Neophytos appears to be deliberately and openly hostile to women are rare. The rest — and by far the greater part — of my material comes from careful sifting of his narratives: from observing images, words used, repetitions, allocation of roles, treatment of characters, creation of stereotypes. It is to the non-deliberate, to the aside, to the 'trivial' statement<sup>10</sup> that I look in order to reconstruct Neophytos' conception of the female gender. Because this is how it appears in his writings; because this is how he experienced it; because this is how power functions.

## II

Let us begin with some brief observations on what Neophytos would have recognised as 'the beginning': the story of Creation and its heroine, Eve. The bias towards the male ('sexism') which permeates the story of the Creation and Fall has already been pointed out by a number of scholars. They have drawn attention to the way in which, through the story of Genesis, the prototypes of the genders are given in the personas of Adam and

10. Isolating from their context statements which appear to be 'trivial' in themselves, helps reveal the assumptions of wider significance which such statements may carry. This is a practise employed by social anthropologists and adopted by feminists as a 'consciousness raising' technique.



Eve; and that in this archetypal story the male plays a superior role, the female an inferior one.<sup>11</sup> The archetypal image of Eve represents unregenerated womanhood, in fallen condition, characterised by inherent weakness, susceptibility to temptation and a propensity to sensuality. The story provides both a justification and the highest moral authority for establishing woman's inferior position — for it was God himself who, in the form of just punishment, subjected Eve to the male.<sup>12</sup>

Neophytos reproduces all these ideas in his writings. Referring to Eve far more frequently than he does to Adam, he repeatedly presents her as Eve the transgressor, the erring woman whose one sinful act brought misery to the rest of mankind.<sup>13</sup> In bitter terms, Neophytos describes in a poem the misery that befell man as a result of the Fall. Significantly, the cause of this is expressed at the beginning of the poem as follows:

Τοῦ Παραδείσου τὸ φυτόν, καὶ τοῦ διαβόλου ὁ φθόνος  
τοῦ ὄψεως δὲ τὰ ρήματα, καὶ τῆς γυνῆς ἡ ἀπάτη  
εἰς λήθην μὲ προσήγαγον τῆς ἐντολῆς κυρίου.<sup>14</sup>

11. Scholars also point out that other, more popular Creation stories were available at the time of the editing of the Bible. These other stories were suppressed because they did not uphold the image of male supremacy. The same goes for the story of the Fall and the Flood. See M. Daly, *Beyond God the Father. Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston 1974) 44-68; E. Chiera, *They Wrote on Clay* (Chicago 1938) 118-34, esp. 119-25, 130-1; E. Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (Harmondsworth 1982) esp. 71-88; E. Figs, *Patriarchal Attitudes* (London 1978) 35-65; M. Stone, *The Paradise Papers. The Suppression of Women's Rites* (London 1976) esp. 4-25, 119-43, 215-57; Spender, *Man Made Language*, 165-71. See also E.R. Leach, 'Genesis as Myth', *Discovery* 23 (May 1962) 30-35, esp. 32-33.

12. Church Fathers could thus refer to the story and conclude that equality between the sexes can only be a bad thing: ἐκ τῆς ἰσοτιμίας μάχη τις γένηται καὶ φιλονεικία: John Chrysostom, 'Εγκώμιον εἰς Μάξιμον', *MPG* 51, 225-42, esp. 231. Similar statements in Gregory Theologos, Παινετικὸν πρὸς Ὀλυμπιάδα, *MPG* 37, 1542-50, esp. 1543. The story of Eve continues to provide moral justification for the subjection of female to male, to this day. See J.K. Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage* (Oxford 1964) 276-8, 150-4; J. du Boulay, *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village* (Oxford 1974) 101 ff.; 'Ἀσμα τοῦ Ἀδάμ καὶ τῆς Εὔας', Th. Papadopoulos, *Δημώδη Κυπριακά Ἀσματα* (Nicosia 1975) 8-11, esp. 10.96-105.

13. So in Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189, fols. 30b-31a, fol. 51b; Cod. Athen. 522, fol. 42b; Cod. Lesb. Leim. 2, fol. 261b; Cod. Coisl. Gr. 287, fol. 39b; Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 121a; Λόγος ἐπιτομος περὶ Μαρίας τῆς Θεοπαίδος, ed. M. Jugie ('Homélies Mariales Byzantines', *PO* 15, [109]-[114]) [112] .39-.40 (implied); Λόγος εἰς τὰ Ἁγία Φῶτα, ed. M.-H. Congourdeau ('Ἐπετηρίς Κέντρου Ἐπιστημονικῶν Ἑρευνῶν VIII (Nicosia 1975-77) 139-56) 140.36-.46; thereafter abbreviated to Holy Lights.

14. Περὶ τοῦ παραδείσου τὸ φυτόν, ed. I.P. Tsiknoroulllos (Τρία ἀνώνυμα

Two points are worth observing here: first, that Eve is not named. She has been generalised as 'the woman'. This is important, for all of Eve's characteristics (temptation, gullibility — with its inescapable insinuation of a somewhat inferior intelligence — sensuality, destruction, guilt for the Fall) and therefore her just Godly punishment of subjection to the male, are projected onto the entire female sex. Second, Eve is not presented as the principal culprit. Her guilt is shared by the snake and, above all, by the devil. The objective of this is simple: to make Eve responsible for the Fall of all mankind, would be to bestow her with tremendous evil power. To avoid this, her guilt is shared. Within this context, this amounts to no less than a divestment of power from Eve. Thus, on the one hand Eve — and hence all women — bears the stamp of deceit (ἀπάτη) particularly in her relation to the male sex;<sup>15</sup> but on the other hand she is also given another characteristic, that of being gullible, easily deceived herself (εὐξαπάτητος).<sup>16</sup> Thus, it is the devil who is the main culprit: Eve is merely an easily persuaded organ of his.

Βυζαντινὰ ποιήματα ἐπανευρίσκουν τὸν ποιητὴν τῶν ἁγίων Νεόφυτον, Κυπριακὰ Σπουδαί 27 (1963) 75-117 88-89.

15. Ibid., 88.2-3. Neophytos was not alone in stressing that Eve's deceit was directed against a male. To give only one example, Romanos the Melodist depicts Adam as saying that he is not pleased to hear Eve's announcement of Christ's birth: her voice is a woman's voice and she might, as of old, deceive him. Later in the poem, Eve complains to Mary that Adam keeps blaming her for the Fall: *Sancti Romani Melodi Cantica. Cantica Genuina*, ed. P. Maas and C.A. Trypanis (Oxford 1963): On the Nativity II, 9-16, esp. 11.8'-13.0'; thereafter abbreviated to *Romani Cantica Genuina*. Eve also appears as a deceiver in Cypriot folk songs. See 'Ἀσμα τοῦ Ἀδάμ καὶ τῆς Εὔας' (cited note 12).

16. E.G.: ξύλον καὶ ἀνὴρ καὶ παρακοὴ καὶ εὐξαπάτητος γυνὴ τὴν ἡμετέραν φύσιν τοῦ παραδείσου ἐξέωσαν: Λόγος εἰς τὴν παγκόσμιον Ὑψωσιν τοῦ Τιμίου καὶ Ζωοποιοῦ Σταυροῦ, ed. I.P. Tsiknoroulllos ('Ἀπόστολος Βαρνάβας (1954) 258-62) 258. Similarly: Χαῖρε ξύλον πάντιμον, ὅτι ξύλον καὶ ἀνὴρ καὶ παρακοὴ καὶ εὐξαπάτητον γύναιον τὴν ἡμετέραν φύσιν τοῦ παραδείσου ἐξέωσαντες, πάλιν διὰ ξύλου σου, καὶ τοῦ Θεανθρώπου Χριστοῦ, καὶ θαυμαστῆς ὑπακοῆς, καὶ πανάγνου γυναιόυ, αὐτὸν ἀπελάβομεν: Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189, fol. 51b. Or in the Catecheses: 'Ὁ ὄφις' φησὶν 'ἡπάτησέ με καὶ ἔφαγον'. Εἰς τί σε ἡπάτησεν, ὃ προμήτωρ πάντων βροτῶν καὶ ἐλαβες ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου καὶ ἔφαγες; 'Ἰσοθείας ἐλπιδι', φησὶν, 'ἡπάτησέ με καὶ ἔφαγον': Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 121a. Similarly see 'Ἑρμηνεία τῆς Ἐξημέρου, in Τυπικὴ σὺν Θεῷ Διάταξις καὶ λόγοι εἰς τὴν Ἐξαήμερον τοῦ δαίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νεοφύτου τοῦ ἐγκλείστου, ed. Archimandrite Kyprianos (Venice 1779) 56-115, reprinted by I.H. Hadjioannou ('Ἱστορία καὶ ἔργα Νεοφύτου πρεσβυτέρου, μοναχοῦ καὶ ἐγκλείστου (Alexandria 1914) 157-231) 183.35-184.4; thereafter abbreviated to *Hexaemeros*. See also the Cypriot folk song 'Ἀσμα τοῦ Ἀδάμ καὶ τῆς Εὔας', above, 9.60; 10.100-103. Note that in reproducing passages from manuscripts I have retained the original orthography.

Eve's imputed gullibility rules out the possibility of her assuming power. Her punishment by God confirms her fate as inferior. Partly because it would be impossible for Christian ideology to depict God creating evil, and partly because of patriarchal order, Eve is created gullible, tempting, destructive — but not outright evil. What stops Eve from being an evil figure is precisely her lack of power.

Evil women do appear in Neophytos' writings. Significantly, these are the only women who are depicted as holding and exercising power, and who stand alone in the narrative, acting independently from any relation to a powerful male. Whether Neophytos was reacting to the concrete reality of an upsurge in women's presence in the social power structures,<sup>17</sup> or whether he was referring to purely ideological patterns of belief and a fear of powerful females, the fact is that for him powerful females equal evil females.

Neophytos' evil woman par excellence is the empress Eudoxia, who figures in Neophytos' panegyric of John Chrysostom.<sup>18</sup> The devil himself, Neophytos tells us, gathered an evil conference of persons marked by their ungodly unlawfulness, their ἀνομία. From the imperial family Satan chose Eudoxia, accompanied by three other degenerate women (ἄκολάστους) and even bishops. This conference, headed by Eudoxia, conspires against Chrysostom. Eudoxia herself masterminds the conspiracy leading up to John's exile, and seeks ways of killing him. At one stage

17. It has been recently suggested that women in early thirteenth century Byzantine provincial society acted with considerable freedom of social movement; and that there was a high participation of powerful and independently-minded aristocratic women in politics. See A. Laiou, 'The Role of Women in Byzantine Society', XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Akten I/1, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 31.1 (Vienna 1982) 233-60, esp. 233-53; *idem*, 'Addendum to the Report on the Role of Women in Byzantine Society', *ibid.* II/1, 32.1, 198-204; H.N. Angelomatis-Tsougarakis, 'Women in the Despotate of Epirus', *ibid.* II/2, 32.2, 473-80. The evidence, however, is too fragmentary to allow such conclusions to be drawn, and the above observations remain, therefore, as dubiously valid as any generalisation always is. For the opposite — and prevalent — view see J. Beaucamp, 'La Situation Juridique de la Femme à Byzance', *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* 20 (1977) 145-76, esp. 149-53, 175-6; G. Buckler, 'Women in Byzantine Law About 1100 A.D.' *B* 11 (1936) 391-416, esp. 405-8, 411-2; Grosdidier de Matons, 'La Femme dans l'Empire Byzantin' (cited note 1) 13-18.

18. 'Εγκώμιον εἰς τὸν μέγαν ἱεράρχην καὶ πατέρα ἡμῶν Χρυσόστομον, ed. K.I. Dyovouniotis (Athens 1926) esp. 11.35-15.20; 16.7-20; thereafter abbreviated to Chrysostom.

she tries, unsuccessfully, to lure Epiphanius of Cyprus to her side against John.

Reading between the lines of the narrative, three accusations are launched against Eudoxia: conspiracy, sexuality and witchcraft. The word used to describe Eudoxia's approach to Epiphanius is that she tried to 'bewitch' him (σαγηνεῦσαι): while the three women with whom she consorted in her machinations against John are described as sexually promiscuous, degenerate, scheming — and more precisely as old, 'unruly and having many men' (πολύανδροι καὶ ἄτακτοι)<sup>19</sup>: a classic picture of witches, moulded by a long tradition from classical times and which would have been instantly recognised by any Byzantine reading the text.<sup>20</sup> Witchcraft appears to have been taken very seriously in Byzantium: severe punishments were prescribed for it by the State and the Church.<sup>21</sup> The picture of Eudoxia as a witch is further supported by her paramedical activities connected with sexuality:

19. Chrysostom, 13.10; 11.35-38, respectively.

20. Expressions of the witch figure are Circe the seductress, Medea the murderess, Ovid's Dipsias, Aepulios' Oenothea, Horace's Canidia and Sagna. The literary tradition of the evil sorceress readily supported the later christian image of the witch. See J.B. Russel, *A History of Witchcraft. Sorcerers, Heretics and Pagans* (London 1980) 29-32; J. Caro Baroja, 'Magic and Religion in the Classical world', in *Witchcraft and Sorcery*, ed. M. Marwick (Harmondsworth 1982) 73-80. On the survival of pre-christian images of witchcraft in Byzantium, see e.g. the references to Lamias in children's fairy tales, and to old women's magic stories: Michael Psellos, 'Εγκώμιον εἰς τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ, ed. K.N. Sathas (Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη, V (Venice 1876) 3-61) 17; *idem*, Τῷ αὐτῷ [i.e. Τῷ πατριάρχῃ κύρ Μιχαήλ], ed. Sathas, *ibid.* 289.

21. Basil's Canon seventy-two, e.g., imposes on a magus the same *epitimion* as for a murderer: Basil, Κανόνες, ed. G. Ralles and M. Potles (Σύνταγμα τῶν Θεῶν καὶ Ἱερῶν Κανόνων, IV (Athens 1854) 232-3); see also 221-2; thereafter abbreviated to Syntagma. See also the Canons in Syntagma, IV, 250-2, 215. The *epitimion* is one of twenty years, while one of six years is imposed on one who resorts to magicians or keeps magic drugs at home. The latter is punishable by withdrawal of holy communion for five years according to the twenty-fourth Canon of the Synod of Ankara: Syntagma, III (Athens 1853) 66-68. Gregory of Nyssa's third Canon places those who resort to magic on a par with the παραβάτας as having no christian faith: Syntagma, IV, 306-7; Gregory of Nyssa, 'Επιστολὴ Κανονική', *MPG* 45, 221-36, esp. 225-8. John Nystetes specifically included — as did Basil — women amongst those who practised magic. He prescribes withdrawal of holy communion for three years, coupled with fasting and 250 daily *metanoiai*: Syntagma, IV, 434-5. Theodore Studios prescribed for those practising or resorting to magic withdrawal of holy communion for three years and 200 daily *metanoiai*: Theodore Studios, Kano'new, *MPG* 99, 1721-9, esp. 1729, Canons twenty-six and twenty-seven. State punishments varied, from the death penalty to confiscation of property and exile, according to the precise nature of the offence. See Ph. Koukoules, Βυζαντινὸν Βίος καὶ Πολιτισμός, I/2 (Athens 1948) 126-36, 226-37; VI (Athens 1955) 319-25; thereafter abbreviated to Koukoules.

Neophytos tells us that she brings upon herself a disease whereby her entire body is filled with worms and rots away emitting a horrifying smell. Her disease (a clear parallel of her physical with her moral state) is caused by her having made an injection in her genitals.<sup>22</sup> For what purpose we are not told, but the sexual implications are too obvious for any reader to miss. Again, sexuality, clearly if implicitly included in Eudoxia's description and explicitly stated in that of her three old female conspirators, was another well-known characteristic of witches.<sup>23</sup> After her shameful death, Eudoxia's tomb shook and trembled, until the relics of John were brought back to Constantinople and given a proper burial.<sup>24</sup>

The battle in the story of Chrysostom is clearly a classic conflict between good and evil. As one writer on witchcraft put it: 'The witch myth (. . .) recognises an opposition of moral values; an opposition of good and bad, right and wrong, proper and improper, sinful and righteous. The witch is always on the wrong side of the moral line, he is a figure of sin incarnate'. But further: 'The witch is the figure of a person who has turned traitor to his own group. He has secretly taken the wrong side in the basic social opposition between 'us' and 'them'. This is what makes him a criminal and not only a sinner'. In the christian world, 'the witch would be conceived as one who had secretly left Christ and gone over to the devil'.<sup>25</sup> This is precisely how Eudoxia is conceived. In the narrative, John stands as the power

22. Chrysostom, 16.10-18.

23. Circe is an archetypal bewitching seductress. Before her the Sumerian Lilitu, the Hebrew Lilith and the Greek Lamias had sexual intercourse with sleeping men or seduced those who were awake. Christianity turned Eve into the prototype sensual seductress. Witches, from the classical tradition (Circe, Medea) onwards, were experts in the manufacture of poisons, but also of love filters. Witchcraft and female sexuality continued to be closely related in medieval Western Europe, too — hence Kramer and Sprenger's 'All witchcraft comes from lust which is in women insatiable'. See Russel, *op. cit.*, 31-32, 113-8; Caro Baroja, *op. cit.*, 78-79; H. Kramer and J. Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, transl. Rev. Summers (New York 1971) (first appeared 1486); Daly, *Beyond God the Father* (cited note 11) 62-65. On the relation of female sexuality to witchcraft see M. Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (London and Boston 1972) 28-29, 38; Figs, *Patriarchal Attitudes* (cited note 11) 43-44, 58-65; B. Ehrenreich and D. English, *Witches, Midwives and Nurses. A History of Women's Healers* (London 1973) 13-14, 26-28.

24. Chrysostom, 16.18-19.

25. P. Meyer, 'Witches', in *Witchcraft and Sorcery* (cited note 20) 54-70, esp. 67, 69.

of good, siding with God; Eudoxia, a traitor to Christianity, stands clearly and explicitly associated with the devil. Thus she also becomes a convenient way of expressing misogyny under the guise of christian piety. As Leach said, 'The power of the witch is seen as a threat to the established order'. The witch is illegitimate because her power is incompatible 'with the interests of those who exercise authority in the social system'.<sup>26</sup> Since this system is patriarchal, it follows that any female who dares to hold — and exercise — power outside the influence of a male is, by definition, anti-social. If she further exercises this power against a male, then she would be deemed to have reached the ultimate in anti-social behaviour: witchcraft.

Eudoxia does not stand alone as the personification of evil in female form. In another story of Neophytos' where evil in female form is depicted fighting goodness, the charge of witchcraft is openly made: in the panegyric of Nikolaos, Artemis is described as a *μυαρά* woman. She prepares a highly inflammable magic oil and, pretending to be christian, she persuades some sailors to take it to the metropolis of Lycia and light the saint's lamp for her. Her intention is to burn the church and the whole city, and this is avoided only through the saint's intervention.<sup>27</sup> Later in the narrative, Neophytos describes Nikolaos' cleansing of the city of paganism. He destroys the temple of Artemis: a place where fantastic sayings were given deceiving the people, and the home of many devils, who left it, cursing.<sup>28</sup>

Both the story of Chrysostom and that of Nikolaos depict the symbolic battle between good and evil, good triumphing in the end (Nikolaos overrules Artemis' power by his symbolic destruction of the temple; Eudoxia's tomb only ceases to tremble when Chrysostom's relics are returned to Constantinople). What is relevant to us is that in all of Neophytos' writings where this battle takes place<sup>29</sup> evil is always personified in female form.

26. E.R. Leach, *Social Anthropology* (Glasgow 1982) 221; idem, *Political Systems of Highland Burma. A Study of Kachin Social Structure* (London 1954) esp. 89-90, 179-82.

27. Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν μέγαν καὶ θαυματουργὸν ἱεράρχην καὶ πατέρα ἡμῶν Νικόλαον, ed. G. Anrich (*Hagios Nikolaos. Der heilige Nikolaos in der griechischen Kirche*, I: Die Texte (Leipzig-Berlin 1913) 392-417) 399.17-400.5; thereafter abbreviated to Nikolaos.

28. Nikolaos, 403.3-22.

29. Except in his story of the Angels: Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189, fols. 141a-152b.

This is neither accidental nor surprising. Misogyny was a fundamental tenet of Byzantine thinking.<sup>30</sup> Already from its very creation christian ideology was fundamentally misogynistic.<sup>31</sup> Amongst the leading figures of the Orthodox Church, John Chrysostom was perhaps the most vehement and vitriolic, ever ready to portray woman as cruel, uncaring, vain, disloyal, an altogether contemptible creature;<sup>32</sup> and in the twelfth century Eustathios of Thessalonike accused women of much the same attributes (though in the tone of a mere rebuke or disapproval) when he lamented that they abandon their children to wet nurses.<sup>33</sup> Theognostos, the author of a 'Thesaurus' written in the first half of the thirteenth century, posed the question 'what is a woman?' and answered it in a long and extremely misogynistic litany of abusive terms: woman is described, amongst other things, as the friend and organ of the devil, the source of all evil, a shameless and wild beast, a poisonous snake, a thesaurus of dirt, a sexual trap which is insatiable ...<sup>34</sup> Theognostos reminds his reader that Secundus had called her a 'necessary evil': 'necessary' because she is needed for procreation; 'evil', because she is.<sup>35</sup>

Official misogyny was not monopolised by the Church. The literary sources mention little of females, but when they do it is in order to denigrate them, by allusions to female feebleness, vanity, even perversion. It is sufficient to recall the depictions of Theodora and Antonia in Procopios' *Secret History* (both, like Neophytos' Eudoxia, accused of witchcraft, sensuality and a conspiratorial nature)<sup>36</sup>; the charges (again, of conspiracy and

sexuality) launched against Theophano by Theognostos and by popular poetry;<sup>37</sup> the well known advice to Kekaumenos to his son never to trust or befriend women but to avoid them altogether;<sup>38</sup> or Ptochoprodromos' depiction of the shrew who reduces her husband to the state of pretending to be a beggar so that, unrecognised by her, he would receive a plate of food.<sup>39</sup> The despising and mistrust of women expressed in the fourteenth century poem 'Mirror of Women' (a kind of encyclopaedia of misogyny, whose author establishes female perversion, claiming contributions from sources such as the Bible, profane literature and popular proverbs), or that expressed in much Cretan fifteenth and sixteenth century poetry,<sup>40</sup> does not in fact move into a different mental plane from Chrysostom's exclamations or Theognostos' depiction of what a woman is.

And if misogyny was not a monopoly of the Church neither was it a monopoly of men. Texts written by women writers are marked by an avoidance of discussion of women. When they do,

16.1-3; III, 25.8-9 (for Antonina); XXII, 126.16-127.18 (for Theodora). For charges of sexuality, conspiracy, cruelty: I, II, III, IV, V (for Antonina); III, IV, IX, X, XV, XVI, XVII, XXII, XXVII, XXX; and see ed. Loeb, IX.15-26 (Theodora). Note that Antonina is also accused of incest: I, II, III, IV, V. The reader should not be misled by Justinian's description as a demon. By presenting him thus, Procopius achieves two things, in gender terms: firstly, he is exonerating Justinian, for the fact that he was born a demon is evidently one which does not involve the taking of any decisions and steps on his part — by contrast to the witches (Theodora, Antonina) who do precisely act consciously and deliberately in order to enter into relations with the forces of evil. Secondly, he is restoring the superior male position: a demon is obviously superior to a witch; and, in an inverted reproduction of the Adam-Eve relationship, the witch is an aid and servant of the demon. For Justinian's depictions as a demon, see XII, 79.12-82.21; XVIII, 106.6-10; XVIII, 111.2-10.

37. Theogn. Thes., 201-3, § 12.1-5; Για τὴ βασιλίσσα Θεοφανώ, in Ποιητικὴ Ἀνθολογία, ed. L. Politis, I (Athens 1975) 174.

38. *Cekaumeni Strategicon*, ed. B. Wassiliewski and V. Jernstedt (Amsterdam 1965) 54.21-26; cf. 61.20-21; 42.26-44.8; 51.8-11; 55.30-56.30.

39. Τοῦ Προδρόμου κυροῦ Θεοδώρου πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τοῦ Μαυροῦ ὠδή, ed. D.-C. Hesselring and H. Pernot, *Poèmes Prodromiques en Grec Vulgaire* (Amsterdam 1968) 30-37.

40. See e.g. the fifteenth century female portraits painted by Bergadis, Ἀπόκοπος, of women as frivolous, pretentious, treacherous; by Sachlikes of women as dirty, cruel, envious, using their sexuality in order to enslave, abuse and destroy men; or the sixteenth century misogynist poem ironically entitled 'In Praise of Women': Bergadis, Ἀπόκοπος, ed. S. Alexiou (Athens 1971) esp. 22.143-25.226; S. Alexiou, Κρητικὴ Ἀνθολογία (Herakleion 1969) 44-45, 48-54, 62-64; G. Morgan, *Cretan Poetry: Sources and Inspiration* (Herakleion 1960) 69-86.

30. See Grosdidier de Matons, 'La Femme dans l'Empire Byzantin' (cited note 1) 18-20; C. Mango, *Byzantium. The Empire of New Rome* (London 1980) 225-6.

31. See note 11 and esp. Daly, *Beyond God the Father*.

32. See e.g. John Chrysostom, Πρὸς τοὺς ἔχοντας παρθένους συνεισάκτους, MPG 47, 495-514, esp. 502 ff.; idem, Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Μάρτυρον, MPG 51, 225-42.

33. *Eustathii Commentarii ad Homerum Odysseam*, ed. G. Stallbaum, I (Leipzig 1825) 88.

34. *Theognosti Thesaurus*, ed. J.A. Munitiz (Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca, V (Brepols-Turnhout 1979) 11-12, § 11; thereafter abbreviated to Theogn. Thes. See also idem, 'A "Wicked Woman" in the 13th Century', XVI Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress (cited note 17) II/2, 32.2, 529-37. Munitiz places the passage within the context of the scandalous affair of emperor John III Vatatzes with a woman known as the Marchessina. Even if this hypothesis is correct, it does not remove the misogynistic character of the passage, but merely disguises it under a pretext.

35. Theogn. Thes., II, § 10.

36. Procopius, Ἀνέκδοτα, ed. Bonn. For charges of witchcraft see I, 13.9-10; I,

it is usually in derogatory terms that they speak of their own sex. Kassia's opinion is that woman is a κακόν even if she is beautiful; if she is ugly, she is even worse.<sup>41</sup> Anna Comnena spares only her mother and her grandmother from her general commentary on women — such as that women are given to easily-shed tears, to fear and panic; that they are of low intelligence and incapable of dealing with serious matters; or that they are frivolous, morally unstable and unreliable.<sup>42</sup> Foundresses of female monasteries are no less severe on members of their own sex. In Typika such as those of Irene Comnena or Theodora Palaiologina, the nuns are repeatedly required to 'emasculate' themselves,<sup>43</sup> to overcome their 'female, soft and weak nature'. All female Typika speak of weakness as inherent in female nature,<sup>44</sup> of natural female gullibility and propensity to sin, of Eve's original transgression and the guilt burdening the female sex ever since.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, Neophytos can without embarrassment create women in his narratives who express despising of their own sex: Μη βδελύξη, δοῦλε τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὴν ἀσθένειαν ἡμῶν, μὴ ἀπόση ἡμᾶς ἐλομένας σωθῆναι, the women beg Alypius, he high on his column, they low on the ground.<sup>46</sup> Within the context of the theory of the 'dominant' and 'muted' groups, the passage constitutes a double irony: not only is a male writing up what purports to be 'female' narrative, not only is he 'giving expression' to a group from which this very power has been denied; but he can also feel no less honest about it since this is most probably how women themselves, immersed in the patriarchal ideology of their culture, perceived themselves.

41. See Buckler, 'Women in Byzantine Law' (cited note 17) 415; K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur*, II (New York 1970) 715-6.

42. Anna Comnena, *Alexias*, ed. Bonn, III, 3, 144.9-146.13; III, 6, 7, 8; III, 7, 160.16-161.3; III, 8, 163.12-18; IV, 4, 198.1-10; XV, 2, 312.10-314.5.

43. Τυπικὸν τῆς Σεβασμίας Μονῆς τῆς Ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς Κεχαριτωμένης, MPG 127, 991-1128, esp. 1000; *Le Typikon du monastère de Notre Dame της Βεβαίας Ἐλπίδος*, ed. H. Delehaye (Deux typika Byzantins de l'Époque des Paléologues (Bruxelles 1921) 18-105) 34.21-26; 51.10.

44. *Typikon du monastère de Lips*, ed. Delehaye (*ibid.* 106-140) 108.5-6; 115.1-2; *Typikon Βεβαίας Ἐλπίδος*, *op. cit.* 29.30-32; 49.27-28; 85.6-7.

45. E.g. *Typikon Βεβαίας Ἐλπίδος*, *op. cit.* 26.5-14; 41.30-31; 89.20-31.

46. Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν βίον τοῦ δόσιου καὶ Θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀλυπίου τοῦ κιονίτου, ed. H. Delehaye (*Les Saints Stylites* (Bruxelles 1923) 188-94) 192.6-8; thereafter abbreviated to Alypius.

The reason for the misogyny of these men and women is the fact that they are simply expressing the 'reality' produced by the patriarchal structure of their culture. Permeating every aspect of the social formation — including institutions essential to its reproduction such as the Church, the administrative establishment, the family, monasticism — patriarchal assumptions were a fundamental component of the 'common sense' of the Byzantine world. Gramsci's notion of 'civil society', in which a combination of social coercion and consensus determined by the taken-for-granted of everyday life secures social-structural and ideological continuity, provides useful insights. As Gramsci stated: 'One of the commonest totems is the belief about everything that exists that it is 'natural', that it should exist, that it could not do otherwise than exist'.<sup>47</sup> The belief that the established order and ideas are 'natural' is translated by patriarchy into the concept of 'natural' differences between the sexes. Thus, to quote only one Byzantine example, Leo VI found that free access of women to Law Courts created 'a paradox, as well as a confusion and subversion of the natural barriers between the sexes'; and that such laws as allowed this 'betray the natural modesty and decency which are characteristic of women'.<sup>48</sup> Byzantine women took the 'natural barriers' and their 'characteristic' traits not as cultural constructions, but as truly natural. It is therefore not surprising to find the misogyny that permeates male Byzantine texts to be equally present in women's texts. Thus, too, it is not surprising to find that evil, when it appears in human form in Neophytos' writings, is contained in female bodies.

Apart from Eudoxia and Artemis, two other evil female figures appear in Neophytos, in his Interpretation of the Apocalypse.

47. A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and transl. Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith (London 1971) 157, 206-76, 348-51. See also C. Boggs, *Gramsci's Marxism* (London 1976) 39-40. Gramsci was referring to industrial societies, but I believe the gist of his argument as referred to above to be equally applicable to pre-industrial societies. For the continued idea that female submission to the male is 'natural' in modern rural Greece, see Campbell, *Honour, Family, Patronage* (cited note 12) 56-57, 150-4, 269-72, 276-8; du Boulay, *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village* (cited note 12) 101-14, esp. 106.

48. P. Noailles and A. Dain, *Les Nouvelles de Léon VI le Sage* (Paris 1944) N.48, 189-91, esp. 189. This translation in English by J. O'Faolain and L. Martines, *Not In God's Image* (London 1979) 91. Similarly, Anna Comnena talks of the σύμφυτον αἰδῶ τῆς γυναικός: *Alexiad*, ed. Bonn, XII, 3, 143.20-21; and Chrysostom says in reference to women, τῆς φύσεως ἣν ἡ ἀσθένεια: MPG 50, 633.



On the first occasion, Neophytos more or less repeats rather than interprets the passage concerning Jezabel. She falls neatly into the pattern of the witch: deceitful, unchristian, collaborating with Satan, deadly dangerous, emphatically sensual — and beyond her husband's power.<sup>49</sup>

On the second occasion, evil is personified in the woman who appears in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse, pregnant, surrounded by the sun, the moon at her feet, twelve stars around her head.<sup>50</sup> In violent contradiction to the traditional interpretations of this figure,<sup>51</sup> and committing 'a grave error' according to a modern theologian,<sup>52</sup> Neophytos invests this woman with the power of evil. Greatly distorting the text, he assumes that Satan pursued her and tried to devour the child simply because he did not recognise, dressed as she was in her glorious attire, that she was 'deflowered Anti-Theotokos and mother of the Anti-Christ' and the devil's own collaborator. Again, whereas in John's Apocalypse the devil simply pursues the woman into the desert but is unable to destroy her, Neophytos adds arbitrarily:

Ὁ δὲ διάβολος λυγρῆσας καὶ κατὰ τῆς γυναικός,  
οὐδέ κατ' αὐτῆς ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἰσχύς, ἀλλ' ἵνα ζήσῃ ἐν  
τῷ τέως· ὀνήζεται δὲ εὐκαιρῶς τὸν ἄξιον αὐτῆς Θάνατον.<sup>53</sup>

Neophytos' vehement rejection of the woman, his distortion of the text by misinterpreting and adding elements which give it new and different dimensions, and which turn Neophytos into an unorthodox interpreter, are not simply due to his limited theological knowledge. Neophytos' interpretation of most of the other passages of the text tend to be closely related to the text itself. Whenever he greatly distorts it by additions and overdrawn interpretations he does so in order to express personal beliefs and

49. Περὶ τῆς Ἀποκαλύψεως τοῦ Ἁγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Θεολόγου, ed. B. Egglezakes ('Ἀνέκδοτον Ὑπόμνημα τοῦ Ὁσίου Νεοφύτου τοῦ Ἐγκλείστου εἰς τὴν Ἀποκάλυψιν, in Ἐπετηρίς Κέντρου Ἐπιστημονικῶν Ἑρευνῶν, VIII (1975-77) 73-185, ed. in 87-112) 89.70-90.86; thereafter abbreviated to N.'s Apocalypse.

50. Apocalypse, 12.1-17; N.'s Apocalypse, 99.36-101.76.

51. See Egglezakes, *op. cit.* esp. 82-83. See also M. Graef, *Mary. A History of Doctrine and Devotion* (London and New York 1963) 27-31.

52. Egglezakes, *op. cit.* 82. An ancient reader of the Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189 containing Neophytos' interpretation, also considered it ἀνάρμοστον to Orthodox beliefs and recorded his disapproval on fol. 68a. See Egglezakes, *op. cit.* 82-83.

53. N.'s Apocalypse, 101.60-62.

attitudes which on occasions such as this one do not even agree with the text which he is supposedly interpreting. Neophytos is expressing here extreme misogyny, whereby the woman is seen as totally evil and is condemned to death. His excuse for doing so is based on the information that the woman gave birth in pain and that she was not a virgin — the latter being an arbitrary addition of Neophytos'.<sup>54</sup> In other words, that she was not the Virgin Mary. The conclusion emerges clearly: in Neophytos' mind, any woman other than the Virgin Mary, any woman who gives birth in pain and unvirginal, is evil. As such, she deserves to die.

### III

Despite the above descriptions, woman as a real force of evil is an extreme which Neophytos generally avoids. Far more commonly he depicts woman not as totally evil, but connected with sin, wrong-doing, spiritual and moral decline.

Sexuality is the most common and serious accusation hurled against her. The notion that a woman's power resides in her sexuality is an apparent paradox when compared with ideas regarding the relative status of the sexes, whereby women are classified as the weaker sex;<sup>55</sup> but it can be understood with reference to a combination of men's fear of women's power<sup>56</sup> (a fear which any ruling group — whether defined in economic, racial or gender

54. *Ibid.* 10.40-43.

55. It is a paradox which persists in various expressions of the patriarchal system. For an example taken from modern Greek society, see R. Hirschon, 'Open Body/Closed Space: The Transformation of Female Sexuality', in *Defining Females*, ed. S. Ardener (London 1978) 66-88, esp. 74; and see note 56 below.

56. Expressions of fear of female sexuality, manifested through the conception of female sexuality as essentially polluting, are found in cultures as diverse as the Lele of the Congo, the New Guinea Mae Enga, the Yoruk Indians of California. See M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (London, Boston and Henley 1969) 146-54. For conceptions of female impurity in Chinese religion, see P. Steven Sangren, 'Female Gender in Chinese Religious Symbols: Kuan Yin, Ma Tsu, and the "Eternal Mother"', *Signs* 9/1 (Autumn 1983) 4-25. With specific reference to fear of female sexuality and ideas of female pollution (e.g. through menstruation or childbirth) in modern rural Greece and Cyprus, see Campbell, *Honour, Family, Patronage* (cited note 12) 31-32, 154, 269-72, 276-8, 290-1; du Boulay, *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village* (cited note 12) 102-3, 105-7; R. Blum and E. Blum, *The Dangerous Hour* (London 1970) 12, 14-15, 19-21, 22, 42, 46 (9), (10), (11), (12), 47 (14), 48 (18), (21), 49 (23), 47-48 (17), 298-300; E. Friedl, *Vasilika: A Village in Modern Greece* (New York 1962) 77; G.H. Papacharalambous, *Κυπριακά Ἡθῆ καὶ Ἔθιμα* (Nicosia 1965) 30-43, esp. 37-38, 43.

terms — naturally has about those over whom it exercises its power) and the fact that women are necessary in terms of sexual desire and the need for procreation. Hence the characterisation of woman as a 'necessary evil'. Once classified as such, woman can also then be used as a scapegoat, the most convenient way of unburdening male guilt by projecting it onto women. Thus Neophytos does not forget to mention, for example, that the Lost Son had dissipated the paternal fortune with whores, fornicating.<sup>57</sup>

Uncontrollable sexuality, deceit and conspiracy all again combine in females to lead yet another man to sin, in Neophytos' narration of the aftermath of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah: the daughters of Lot, seeing that no male was left to have children with, intoxicate Lot and cause him to have sexual intercourse with them. Neophytos fully absolves Lot and burdens the daughters with all the responsibility:

Ἵ ἄθλῑαι, τί πεποιήκατε τῷ γέροντι; Λῶτ δὲ φησὶν οὐκ εἶδῃ,  
ὃ ἐποίησε, τοῦτέστιν οὐδεμίαν αἰσθησὶν ἔσχεν ὅτι ἡμαρτεν  
(. . .) αἱ δὲ οὐκ ἀπέτυχον τοῦ σκοποῦ.<sup>58</sup>

It is not simply that women are accused here of sexual immorality. They are charged with something far more serious, namely with breaking the taboo of incest.<sup>59</sup>

Lévi-Strauss has shown that it is not the biological family or mother, father and child that is the distinguishing feature of human kinship structures: the primordial and, he believes,

57. . . . κακῶς δαπανήσαντα καὶ καταφαγόντα μετὰ πορνῶν καὶ ἀσελγῶν τὸν βίον τὸν πατρικόν: Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 32b; and similarly in fol. 25a: τὸν υἱὸν τὸν καταφαγόντα τὸν βίον μετὰ πορνῶν.

58. Hexaemeros (cited note 16) 225.37-226.4.

59. By 'taboo' I mean a categorical prohibition whose breach would bring extreme shame and fear of supernatural punishment. With specific reference to women, see C. Humphreys, 'Women, Taboo and the Suppression of Attention', in *Defining Females* (cited note 55) 89-108. On what becomes taboo in a society, see Douglas, *Purity and Danger*; S.H. Tambiah, 'Animals are Good to Think and Good to Prohibit', *Ethnology* 8 (1969) 423-59. For an illustration of the way taboos delineate human relationships, see E.R. Leach, 'Concerning Trobriand Clans and the Kinship Category Tabu', in *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups*, ed. J. Goody (Cambridge 1958) 120-45. On Biblical cases of incest, see Leach, 'Genesis as Myth' (cited note 11) esp. 33-35.

universal<sup>60</sup> law is that which regulates marriage relationships, and its pivotal expression is the taboo of incest. Through the prohibition of incest, each family is forced to give up one of its members to another family; and it is on this act of exchange that the kinship structure which holds a society together is built.<sup>61</sup> As Radcliffe-Brown pointed out, the basic characteristic of incest is disloyalty, disobedience to the very laws which dictate the formation and continued existence of the kinship structure.<sup>62</sup>

Viewed from this angle, it is logical that incest would be considered to be an 'unnatural' offence, far worse than simple divergence from existing cultural modes of sexual behaviour, for it does not simply threaten particular relationships, but the entire kinship structure. Since this kinship structure is also patriarchal, incest becomes also a direct threat to patriarchy, since it poses the possibility of a system where no exchange of females need take place. Both Leach and Radcliffe-Brown point out that in pre-industrial societies incest and witchcraft are often thought of as connected: both are classified as 'unnatural' offences since, by denying the social nature of man, both the witch and the incestuous person appear, socially, to deny human nature. It is therefore not surprising that witchcraft and incest are often attributed to the same individuals.<sup>63</sup> Neophytos chooses indeed 'the same individuals' for both offences, namely women. Neophytos may in fact have been quite topical in his references to incest;<sup>64</sup> but as on the first so also on the second occasion in

60. C. Lévi-Strauss, 'Structural Analysis in Linguistics and in Anthropology', in *Structural Anthropology*, I (Harmondsworth 1972) 31-54, esp. 51. The 'universality' of the incest taboo has been conclusively refuted: K. Hopkins, 'Brother-Sister Marriage in Roman Egypt', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22 (1980) 303-54; R. Fox, *Kinship and Marriage* (Harmondsworth 1967) 54-76; J. Goody, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* (Cambridge 1983) esp. 39-45; Leach, *Social Anthropology* (cited note 26) 51.

61. Lévi-Strauss, 'Structural Analysis in Linguistics and in Anthropology', *op. cit.* 46, 31-54; *idem*, 'Language and the Analysis of Social Laws', *ibid.* 55-66, esp. 59-60; *idem*, 'Linguistics and Anthropology', *ibid.* 67-80, esp. 72-73; *idem*, 'Social Structure', *ibid.* 277-323, esp. 309.

62. A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, 'Introduction', in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage* (Oxford 1950) ed. A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde, 1-85, esp. 70-72.

63. Leach, *Political Systems of Highland Burma* (cited note 26) 136-40, esp. 139; see also 89; *idem*, *Social Anthropology* (cited note 26) 221-2; Radcliffe-Brown, 'Introduction' (cited note 62) 70; see also Meyer, 'Witches' (cited note 25) 68.

64. Throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries both Church and State were particularly interested in establishing and enforcing the legislation concerning con-

which he refers to it, it is a woman who is blamed for it. In his catechesis on the Beheading of John the Baptist, it is Herodias who is repeatedly blamed for the incestuous relationship between her and Herod (her husband's brother) and for John's beheading — while Herod is absolved in silence.<sup>65</sup>

As with Herodias and Salome in the catechesis on the Beheading of John the Baptist, and Eudoxia in the panegyric of Chrysostom, so on another occasion Neophytos again promotes the image of woman leading holy man to death. This time (in the panegyric of Gennadios) the woman does so through being inhospitable, cruel and lacking compassion. Gennadios, caught up in a storm in the night, knocks at the door of a widow. Despite his repeated knocks and shouts, she refuses to open the door. The old and exhausted holy man dies in the freezing night on the woman's doorstep. Neophytos uses the story to launch a general attack on such inhospitable persons as this woman, who, in his own time, cause much suffering to travelling monks . . .<sup>66</sup>

Loyalty withdrawn is the characteristic of another female portrait referred to by Neophytos. In describing how Job's wife tried to induce him to blasphemy, she appears as gullible and easily subjected to Satanic influence, even without being conscious of this.<sup>67</sup> This is an idea which Neophytos utilised also in his

sanguinity and affinity as impediments to marriage. See Laiou, 'The Role of Women in Byzantine Society' (cited note 17) 235. On the prohibition of the marriage called *lyksoctos*, *dheseumos* or *dhemeutos*, between blood or spiritual relatives, see Balsamon's commentary on the twenty-seventh canon of Basil and the fifty-third Canon of the Sixth Oecumenical Synod, in *Syntagma* (cited note 21) IV, 161-4; II (Athens 1852) 428-32; K. Harmenopoulos, *Πρόχειρον Νόμων ἢ Ἑξάβιβλος*, ed. K.G. Pitsakes (Athens 1971) IV, § 7, 231-8; § 8, 238-41; thereafter abbreviated to *Hexavivlos*; Koukoules (cited note 21) IV (Athens 1951) 95.

65. Cod. paris. Gr. 1317, fols. 104b-106a. Note that this is an incest based on the kinship structure rather than on the biological family — as was the case with Lot and his daughters — precisely illustrating Lévi-Strauss' point.

66. *Ἐγκώμιον κεφαλαῖως εἰς τὸν ἐν ἁγίοις πατέρα ἡμῶν Γεννάδιον*, ed. H. Delehaye ('Saints de Chypre', *AB* 26 (1907) 221-8) 224.31-225.8.

67. Cod. Athen. 522, fols. 18b-19b. E.g.: *ὁ μισοδίκαιος δαίμων ( . . ) ἐπειράτο κινήσαι διὰ τῆς συζύγου καὶ ἐπὶ κοπρίας πρὸς βλασφημίαν τὸν δίκαιον. Ἦτις καὶ προσελθοῦσα μετὰ χρόνον πολλὴν τῆς τοῦ δικαίου κληγῆς καὶ τὰ τοῦ διαβόλου ῥήματα ἐπὶ στόματος φέρουσα, ἐλεεινῶς δῆθεν πρὸς αὐτὸν διελέγετο . . .* Fol. 18b. Also: *Καὶ ὅρα μοι πάλιν, τὰ τῆς γυναικὸς ὀλίγωρα ῥήματα καὶ τὰ τοῦ διαβόλου τεχνάσματα*. Fol. 19a. Or: *πρὸς αὐτὴν ἀτενίσας καὶ κατανοήσας τὸν διὰ τοῦ στόματος αὐτῆς λαλοῦντα δολίως . . .* Fol. 19b. For an example of a saint's life

description of Eve: woman as an instrument of the devil (Eve, Job's wife), rather than the powerful, fully conscious collaborator (the witch).

The logical extension of this is the development of an idea whereby women cause destruction without having acted at all, merely through being female. This is thrice repeated in Neophytos' case of the daughters of Cain.<sup>68</sup> It is the actions of 'the sons of God', who entered into kinship relations with 'the daughters of Cain', that caused God's wrath and the Flood. Nowhere in the passages does Neophytos bring any charge against these women, other than that Cain was their forefather, a fact over which they had no control. Yet, even though Neophytos' narrative expressly depicts the male characters as the ones who acted to bring about the offensive marriages, it is nevertheless repeatedly stressed that it is because of the women that destruction was brought upon mankind. The belief behind the narrative is, evidently, that women cause sin, destruction and death simply by being female. It was a belief certainly current in Neophytos' times: in an open letter, written to defend his conduct in relation to the mistress of John III Vatatzes — a woman known as the Marchesina — Nikephoros Blemmydes accuses her in a torrent of abusive phrases of being not only wicked, but also, purely and simply, a woman.<sup>69</sup>

It follows that Neophytos would advise his reader to avoid women altogether for, as he put it, *καρποῦ μὴ παρόντος οὐ συχνῶς ὀρεγόμεθα*.<sup>70</sup> Thus, too, Neophytos provides in his *Typikon* not only that entrance to his monastery is forbidden to women (a common feature in male monastic *Typika*) but also that if any woman, intending to cause harm, trespasses into the monastery, she is to be subjected to forty days of *ξηρωφιλία* and an equal number of genuflexions daily.<sup>71</sup> It is the most severe *ἐπιτίμιον* imposed in the entire *Typikon*, and a unique example

modelled on Job's, see *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Φιλαρέτου*, ed. M.-H. Fourmy and M. Leroy ('La Vie de S. Philarete', *B* 9 (1934) 85-170, esp. 113-67) 115.3-137.22.

68. *Hexaemeros*, 192.3-203.7; 208.21-23; Cod. Coisl. Gr. 287, fols. 46a-46b.

69. Nikephoros Blemmydes, *Ἐπιστολὴ καθολικωτέρα καὶ πρὸς πολλοὺς*, *MPG* 142, 605-9. See also Munitiz, 'A "Wicked Woman" in the 13th Century' (cited note 34).

70. Cod. Coisl. Gr. 287, fol. 39b.

71. *Τυπικὴ σὺν Θεῷ Διαθήκη*, ed. I.P. Tsiknoroullou (*Κυπριακά Τυπικά* (Nicosia 1969) 69-104) 89.1-14; thereafter abbreviated to *Typikon*.

in itself amongst male Typika of an ἐπιτίμιον imposed on a woman.<sup>72</sup>

The idea of destruction emanating from females appears in Neophytos' writings in ways other than through named women. The 'natural' characteristics supposedly pertaining to each sex figure prominently in this respect. It is within this context that we find that angels, who, according to Orthodox ideology are bodiless and sexless beings,<sup>73</sup> are nevertheless designated as male. Since they are important creatures in the christian pantheon, patriarchal ideology would allow them to be nothing else. Their names, their characteristics of a military nature, their assumed gender, all are symbols of the male sex.<sup>74</sup>

By contrast, sins are consistently presented by Neophytos as 'female'. The associations and vast range of evocations which are triggered off by the use of the female gender to describe sins, suggest that this use was not a coincidental fact. Neophytos' conception of the sins as female is illustrated by his description of sins as 'mothers' giving birth to 'daughters'. Sins are related to each other in a mother-daughter relationship. For example:

Πορνεία μήτηρ ἀναισθησίας καὶ κλεψίας καὶ ψεύδους καὶ ἐπιπορκίας.  
Φιλαργυρίας δὲ καὶ ἀκηδίας καὶ ὀργῆς καὶ λύπης καὶ ἐτέρων  
πλείστων κακῶν, προμήτωρ καὶ πρόγονος.<sup>75</sup>

Sometimes two sins are depicted as getting together and, out of an unnatural — and, surely, incestuous — union, giving birth to a third one:

Πόθεν γὰρ ἡ ἐπάρατος θυὰς δηλαδὴ γαστριμαργία καὶ  
κενοδοξία εἶχον ὑπηρετεῖσθαι, εἰμὴ ἀξίαν αὐτῶν τὴν  
φιλαργυρίαν συνέλαβον καὶ ἀπέτεκεν θυγατέραν.<sup>76</sup>

72. I have made a comparative study of Byzantine monastic Typika in my forthcoming Ph.D. thesis (see note 6).

73. See e.g. Theogn. Thes. (cited note 34) 206-7.

74. For examples of angels' male names, characteristics etc., see Neophytos' panegyrics for Archangel Michael and for the Gathering of the Angels: Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189, fols. 7b-12b; fols. 141a-152b; also, Hexaemeros (cited note 16) 171.33-35.

75. Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 125a. Similarly: Περὶ πορνείας, ἥτις καὶ ἐστὶ γαστριμαργίας μεν θυγάτηρ, ἀναισθησίας δὲ μήτηρ: Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 124a. Similarly: γαστριμαργίαν, δῆλον ὅτι ἅμα κενοδοξία, σὺν τῇ ἀπλήστῳ αὐτῶν θυγατρί, ἥγουν φιλαργυρία: Cod. Coisl. Gr. 287, fol. 55a.

76. Cod. Coisl. Gr. 287, fol. 55a. Similarly, fornication is described as ἡ τεκοῦσα

Sins are depicted as constantly waging war against the forces of goodness. Such paradigms of goodness as appear in Neophytos' writings are, significantly, of the male gender. In numerous passages Neophytos depicts this war of evil against goodness and hails the victors. In all these passages he is, in fact, depicting rather a war between the sexes, the male hailed as victorious. To give only one of many examples,<sup>77</sup> Neophytos writes that of all the passions three are the worst, from which ὡς ἐκ τριῶν πολυγόνων κακῶν καὶ πολυάνδρων μητέρων, τὰ πάθη τὰ ὀλέθρια ὀλικῶς ἀποτίκτονται, (gluttony, vainglory and avarice). Neophytos continues: οἱ θεοφόροι πατέρες ἡμῶν κατὰ τῶν τριῶν παθῶν διὰ τῶν τριῶν ἀρετῶν ἀνδρικῶς ἐπανεστήσαν · καὶ νικηταὶ τροπαιοῦχοι τῶν ὀλεθρίων παθῶν, θεοστεφεῖς ἀνεδείχθησαν. Armed by these three Godsent weapons (fasting, humility, poverty) the Fathers destroyed the power of the three — female — passions. Note the emphatic and hardly covered gender conflict in Neophytos' concluding passage, below, as much as in the ones above:

Τούτων δὲ τὸ κράτος, ὡς πονηρῶν δεσποινῶν καὶ πολυγόνων μητέρων ἀνδρικῶς καταλύσαντες, συγκαταλύουσι ταύταις καὶ τὰ νοθευμένα τούτων γεννήματα · ἦτοι πορνείαν, ἥτις ἐστὶν γαστριμαργίας θυγάτηρ · ὑπερφηανείαν, κενοδοξίας πρωτότοκον νόθευμα · ἀκηδίαν, φιλαργυρίας δεινότατον κύημα · καὶ τὰ τούτων ἀπαξιαπλῶς πολυειδῆ ἀποκυήματα · (. . .) Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα σὺν ταῖς μητρᾷσιν αὐτῶν ἀνδρείως οἱ πύκται ἐκείνοι κατέβαλλον. Ἀγνεῖαν δὲ καὶ διόρασιν καὶ ἀνδρείαν, οἱ ὄντως ἀνδρεῖοι, θεοσδότως κατώρθωσαν.<sup>78</sup>

κακῇ μήτηρ, who teaches her daughters evil: 'Εἰ ἐμαί', φησί, 'θυγατέρες ἐν ἀληθεία πεφύκατε, ἐμὲ μιμῆσθε καὶ τῇ μητρὶ τῇ (. . .). Πᾶν γὰρ εἶδος κακίας ἐκ τῆς μητρός μου γαστριμαργίας καὶ ἐξ ἐμοῦ τῆς πορνείας γεννᾶται καὶ φαίνεται διὸ καὶ διδάσκω ἡμᾶς τὰς πρωτοτόκους μου θυγατέρας: τὴν κλοπὴν, τὸ ψεῦδος ἅμα καὶ τῇ ἐπιπορκίᾳ: Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 131b. See similarly Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 128a; and 'Εγκώμιον κεφαλαιῶδες εἰς τὸν ὅσιον καὶ θαυματουργὸν πατέρα ἡμῶν Διομήδην τὸν νεόν, ed. H. Delehaye ('Saints de Chypre' (cited note 66) 212-20) 220.10-20; thereafter abbreviated to Diomedes.

77. Gluttony tries to lure Adam and later Christ in the desert. Vanity also tries to lure Christ and the Angels. Both are defeated. Neophytos even defends Adam, writing that at least gluttony did not find him εὐξαπάτητον — in an obvious comparison to Eve who is often called thus (see note 16): Cod. Coisl. Gr. 287, fols. 55b-56a. Likewise: . . . ἡ μὲν ἀπάτη θανάτου γέγονε κολοφών, ἡ δὲ γαστριμαργία μολυσμῶν καὶ φθορᾶς γέγονε κορινίς, ἃς οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν ἅμω πατήσαντες ἀθάνατοι τῷ ὄντι γεγόνασιν: Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317 fol. 121b. In Diomedes the saint is hailed as having defeated ἀνδρείως the eight evils: Diomedes (cited note 76) 220.10-23.

78. Holy Lights (cited note 13) 153.478-481; 155.526-539.

#### IV

Reflecting the general Byzantine literary tradition, where texts eulogising women (other than the Virgin and female saints) remained rare,<sup>79</sup> Neophytos' writings contain few images of good women. When good women do appear in Neophytos' texts, they fall into clearly distinguishable patterns. In sharp contrast to evil women, good women are placed firmly within the context of the family, and since the family is patriarchal, it follows that they hold no power. Otherwise, they are composed of such elements as to ensure a secondary, subservient position to a male representing authority. Further, such women are as divorced of their female sexuality as possible. Let us see in more detail how these patterns of good women are expressed in Neophytos.

Throughout his texts, the good woman is always defined and given an identity in relation and dependance to a male<sup>80</sup> (a dependance which John Chrysostom described in terms of slavery, in his declaration that the woman is not the mistress of her body but the slave of her husband,<sup>81</sup> while in the tenth century Leo VI was content with the much milder statement that the husband is the 'most essential part and head' of the family).<sup>82</sup> Thus, Neophytos mentions Roufina, the mother of Mamas, as pious

79. Byzantine eulogies of women tend to be confined to mother figures — such as Michael Psellos' and Theodore Studios' eulogies for their mothers; Anna Comnena's affection for her mother, Irene Doukas; that of Alexios I for his mother, Anna Dalassena. John Moschos' *Spiritual Meadow* remains an exceptional and extraordinary text — especially in view of the fact that it was written by an ascete — in that it gives a good role to women, who appear in the narrative as exemplifying christian piety, often leading men away from sin: the reverse of Eve. Michael Psellos, 'Εγκώμιον εἰς τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ (cited note 20); Theodore Studios, *Κατήχησις ἐπιτάφιος εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ μητέρα*, *MPG* 99, 884-901; Anna Comnena, *Alexiad.*, esp. III, 3, 144.19-146.13; III, 6, 7, 8; XV, 2, 312.10-314.5; John Moschos, *Λειμών*, *MPG* 87.3, 2852-3112, esp. 2865, 2877-81, 2889-92, 2904, 2912-3, 2933-6, 2940, 2988-92, 3049, 3057-64, 3068-9, 3089, 3093-100. See also Grosdidier de Matons, 'La Femme dans l'Empire Byzantin' (cited note 1) 18-20.

80. An old and resilient patriarchal expression. See, e.g., K. Mentzu-Meimare, 'Η παρουσία τῆς γυναίκας στίς Ἑλληνικές ἐπιγραφές ἀπὸ τὸν Δ' ἕως τὸν Ι' μ.χ. αἰῶνα', XVI Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress (cited note 17) II/2, 32.2, 433-43. Where in most cases the woman is described in dependent relation to a man (wife, daughter, mother, sister, of a male).

81. 'Η γυνὴ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος οὐκ ἐξουσιάζει, ἀλλὰ καὶ δούλη καὶ δέσποινα ἔστι τοῦ πανδρός: John Chrysostom, 'Ομιλία ΙΘ', *MPG* 61, 151-160, esp. 152.

82. Noailles and Dain, *Les Nouvelles de Léon VI Le Sage* (cited note 48) N. 112, 367-73, esp. 371.

and noble, but only in so far as she is a useful and necessary ingredient in the story of Mamas. Characteristically, she dies as soon as she gives birth: her role fulfilled, she is dismissed from the narrative.<sup>83</sup>

Likewise, Alypios' mother and Matrona, his maternal aunt, are chiefly characterised by their kin relationship to the male saint.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, respect for another woman, Elisabeth, mother of John the Baptist, evolves from her maternal relationship to another male saint.<sup>85</sup> Even in the case of Mariam, whose authority as a prophetess Neophytos expressly acknowledges, he still finds it necessary to define her in relation to a man — so that she is 'the sister of Aaron and Moses'.<sup>86</sup> Other female figures are similarly defined: Anna is 'the widow of Phanouel'; Susannah 'the daughter of Helkion and wife of Joachim'.<sup>87</sup> In the absence of a father or husband, Christ becomes the most convenient way of providing the parallel male presence necessary to mark the woman's identity. Thus, through the idea of 'daughter and bride of Christ', Marina acquires such a husband and father. She is described as a 'fair martyr and fair virgin daughter and bride of Christ the King'.<sup>88</sup> Following a well established pattern in hagiography, other good women are mentioned by Neophytos exclusively because of a circumstantial relationship to the central male figure of authority in the narrative. Such is the case, for example, of Mary Magdalen and the Myrrh-bearing women.<sup>89</sup>

83. 'Εγκώμιον εἰς τὸν Ἅγιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ Μεγαλομάρτυρα Μάμαντα, ed. I.P. Tsiknoroullou ('Ἅγιοι τῆς Κύπρου in *Κυπριακαὶ Σπουδαί* 30 (1966) 133-7) 133.18-134.10; thereafter abbreviated to Mamas.

84. Alypios (cited note 46) 189.3-30; 192.3-29.

85. Λόγος εἰς τὸν Εὐαγγελιστὴν τῆς Ὑπεραγίας Δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου καὶ Ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας, ed. E.M. Toniolo ('Omilia e Catechesi Mariane Inedite de Neofito il Recluso (1134-1220 c.)', *Marianum* 36 (1974) 238-62) 252.252-262; thereafter abbreviated to Annunciation.

86. Εἰς τὰς Ὠδὰς, ed. I.H. Hadjiioannou (Νεοφύτου πρεσβυτέρου μοναχοῦ καὶ ἐγκλείστου Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τοὺς Ψαλμοὺς (Athens 1935) 129-39) 129.33-34; thereafter abbreviated to Odes.

87. Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 175b.

88. 'Εγκώμιον εἰς τὴν Ἁγίαν καὶ ἐνδοξον Μεγαλομάρτυρα Μαρτίαν, ed. I.P. Tsiknoroullou ('Ἅγιοι τῆς Κύπρου, *Κυπριακαὶ Εποῦδαί* 30 (1966) 160-1) 160.2-3; thereafter abbreviated to Marina.

89. Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189, fol. 148b, fol. 149b; Εἰς τοὺς Ψαλμοὺς, ed. I.H. Hadjiioannou (cited note 86) 9-128, 51, Ψ.ΜΔ'; Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1137, fols. 67a-67b. For incidental good women in saints' lives, see S. Stephani Junioris, *MPG*



The structure of the narrative ensures that woman is firmly kept in a secondary position, even on the rare occasions in which a woman claims an equal position vis-à-vis a man in the narrative. An example of this is provided in Neophytos' panegyric of Andronikos and Athanasia. Both are described by Neophytos as saints and equally venerated miracle workers.<sup>90</sup> Yet Athanasia's name invariably follows that of Andronikos', in accordance with the patriarchal order of address. Moreover, at times she completely vanishes from the narrative, Andronikos remaining the only saint in it. When Neophytos states that he had occasion to witness the miraculous power of the myrrh emanating from their (common) grave, the myrrh is described as that 'which springs from the relic of this divine Andronikos'.<sup>91</sup> In spite of earlier references to miracles performed by 'their relics',<sup>92</sup> on this occasion involving a witnessed miracle, Athanasia is not mentioned: power to perform miracles is quietly monopolised by the male saint.<sup>93</sup> Already in the very title of the homily this bias towards Andronikos is apparent. He is described as 'our father and miracle performing Andronikos' while Athanasia, fitting into the role of woman as man's aid, is called συμπράκτορα<sup>94</sup> — even though the miracles are accredited to both of them. On other occasions she is simply called 'Andronikos' wife'.<sup>95</sup>

Such bias towards the husband, even when both spouses are acknowledged as being equally spiritual, is also noticed in

100, 1069-1185, esp. 1088, 1104-8, 1125-32, 1160-64, 1168-9; *Laudatio in Miracula Sancti Hieromartyris Therapontis*, ed. L. Deubner (*De Incubatione Capita Quattuor* (Lipsiae 1900) 120-34) 129.7-15; *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Φιλάρτου* (cited note 67) 139.10-143.25, 159.10-22; *Διήγησις θαυμάτων τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ ἐνδόξου μεγαλομάρτυρος καὶ θαυματουργοῦ Ἀρτεμίου*, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus (*Varia Graeca Sacra*, VI (Leipzig 1975) 1-79) 11.12-13.9, 33.17-35.11, 40.22-41.28, 44.22-45.18, 51.22-55.11, 57.26-59.8, 71.8-72.23, 74.19-75.18.

90. 'Εγκώμιον εἰς τὸν ἅγιον πατέρα ἡμῶν καὶ θαυματουργὸν Ἀνδρόνικον καὶ εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ συμπράκτορα ὁσίαν Ἀθανασίαν, extract ed. H. Delehaye ('*Saints de Chypre*' (cited note 66) 178-80) 179.3-10, 179.26, 180.14; thereafter abbreviated to Andronikos and Athanasia.

91. Andronikos and Athanasia, 180.14-25.

92. Andronikos and Athanasia, 179.3-10; 179.26; 180.14.

93. We find Andronikos monopolising the myrrh in Theognostos, too: Theogn. Thes., 66.156-67.1.

94. Andronikos and Athanasia, 178.22-25.

95. E.g.: ... πράξει καὶ λόγῳ Θεὸς ἐδόξασεν Ἀνδρόνικον σὺν τῇ ὁμοζύγῳ: Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189, fol. 83a; παρήκεν ἅμα τῇ ὁμοζύγῳ πάντα τὰ τοῦ βίου τερπνὰ: fol. 83b.

Neophytos' depictions of the parents of Mamas. Both are denounced to the eparch of Gagra as being christian. But even though they both stand accused, Neophytos evidently treats the husband, Theodotos, as the responsible party: it is he who is summoned to the authorities and pressed to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods; he who is then sent to the civil authorities of Caesarea (Roufina, his wife, pathetically 'followed him, burdened with the pregnancy of Mamas'); he who is imprisoned 'together with the woman'. When he finally dies in prison, she stays alive only as long as it is necessary to give birth to Mamas. Then, predictably, she 'lay next to the father's corpse, and having prayed to God in her mind about her husband, she, too, fled to the Lord'.<sup>96</sup> Thus, even though Roufina was accused of the same offence, suffered the same punishment of imprisonment and died in the same way as her husband (in prison), she is nevertheless consistently given a secondary position, her fate inextricably following her husband's to the death.

I referred earlier to the patriarchal order of address, whereby the male is addressed first, the female following. The convention is seen at times to override even Neophytos' personal preferences. Thus, even though Neophytos' affection appears to have been directed more towards his mother than his father,<sup>97</sup> and even though he does, on one occasion, overrule the order of address by referring to her in precedence of his father, the patriarchal order of address is quickly restored in his next reference to his parents: the woman is placed second.<sup>98</sup>

She thus remains a figure of circumstantial importance, a secondary character, dependent on a man, defined in relation to a man. 'Thus humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself

96. Mamas (cited note 83) 133.18-134.10.

97. He chooses, for example, the day of her death as the date on which commemorative services for both his parents should be held; and he refers to her as a nun: Alypius (cited note 46) 193.26-194.2. The phenomenon of holy man's attachment to mother, expressed through a close and loving relationship between the two, is not uncommon in saints' stories. Neophytos' own story of Alypius provides such an example; and see, e.g., Vita S. Stephani Junioris (cited note 89) esp. 1073-81, 1088-9, 1093, 1105-8, 1138, 1156. Modern Greek ballads also contain allusions to intense mother-son relationships, even though there they often explode in violence. See M. Alexiou, 'Sons, Wives and Mothers: Reality and Fantasy in Some Modern Greek Ballads', *JMGS* 1/1 (1983) 73-111, esp. 83-93.

98. Alypius, 193.26-29, 194.1.

but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being. (. . .) She is defined and differentiated with reference to a man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute — she is the Other'.<sup>99</sup> It is a proof of the resilience of patriarchy that Simone de Beauvoir's comments are exactly applicable as a description of Neophytos' attitude.

The good woman is denied power; power becomes a characteristic of the evil female. We have already seen in Neophytos' depictions of female evil that an element of this evil power was female sexuality. It follows that Neophytos' good women would have to be divested of it if they are to remain good.

One of the most effective ways of doing so is by utilising the taboo of incest. Neophytos' good women are all presented within the context of a family and in particular in relation to a male: they are mothers, maternal aunts, sisters or daughters of a man.<sup>100</sup> The reader's mind would spontaneously register these women as 'mothers', 'daughters' and so on — and not simply as 'women'. Once classified as such, because of the power of the incest taboo they would equally automatically be classified by the reader as 'asexual'.

Another way in which Neophytos divests good women of sexuality is by stressing their status as virgins; their long years in widowhood; or their very advanced age. Hastrup, drawing from extensive work in the field of social anthropology, views the woman's social identification as tied up with her sexual status. She describes the existence of a conceptual pattern marking women's life cycle, and moving from a state of ambiguous sexual potentiality ('unspecified yet creative virgin'), to another of unambiguous sexual fertility ('sexually specified, child bearing woman'), and then to one of complete lack of sexuality and devoid of creativity ('return to unspecificity of widowhood or

old woman').<sup>101</sup> Women who are not in the second stage are sexually unspecified and are not viewed as true, complete, fully sexual females.

It is well known that virginity was highly praised and safeguarded in Byzantium,<sup>102</sup> the object of the praise being usually understood as being that of sexual purity. But virginal status is also important for the precise reason that in it the woman remains sexually unspecified. If I may use an example from a different society and culture, perhaps the objectives of the Byzantine praise of virginity can be clarified. Ortiz, in his study of the Tewa Indians, found that they have a third sex category, that of virgins, who are not specified as women. The female is not specified as such until she has been sexually associated with a male. In the Tewa's mythological cosmogony, the distinction between the specified woman and the unspecified virgin is so emphatic, that the latter has aspects of both sexes and is the founder of the male half of society, while 'woman' is the founder of the female half.<sup>103</sup> The Tewa example is not an isolated one. Close parallels are provided from cultures as diverse as those of ancient Rome and twentieth century Albanian tribes.<sup>104</sup>

101. By contrast to men's life cycle, whose identification is not tied up to their sexual status, since they are the generalised sex. See K. Hastrup, 'The Semantics of Biology: Virginity', in *Defining Females* (cited note 55) 49-65, esp. 59-60.

102. See e.g. Leo's mention of τὸ σεμνὸν τῆς παρθενίας: Noailles and Dain, *Les Nouvelles de Léon VI Le Sage* (cited note 48) N. 27, 105-11, esp. 109. Church and State laws provided punishments not only for the rape of virgins, but also — for woman and man — for the cases of virgins willingly losing their virginity. See Hexavivlos (cited note 64) VI, 349-50, § 3.5-.10. See also Syntagma (cited note 21) III, 410-1 and 590-3; IV, 159-61. On praise of and advice on virginity, see John Chrysostom, *Εἰς τὰς ἀγίας Μάρτυρας Βερνίκην καὶ Προσδόκην παρθένους*, MPG 50, 629-49; idem, *Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Μάξιμον*, MPG 51, 225-42, esp. 235-6; Clemens I, *Διαταγαὶ τῶν Ἁγίων Ἀποστόλων*, MPG 1, 556-1156, esp. ch. 1A', 825. On the high esteem placed on virginity in Byzantine times see Mango, *Byzantium* (cited note 30) 227; Koukoules (cited note 21) II/2 (Athens 1948) 10-1; and for a discussion of virginity with specific reference to its importance in early Christianity, see Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (cited note 56) 157-8.

103. A. Ortiz, *The Tewa World. Space, Time, Being and Becoming in a Pueblo Society* (Chicago 1969) esp. 89-90, 13-59.

104. Referring to the acquired male characteristics of the Roman Vestal Virgins, Dumézil notes that in many pre-industrial societies virginity is conceived 'comme un état intermédiaire entre la féminité et la masculinité' G. Dumézil, *La Religion Romaine Archaique* (Paris 1966) 560. Amongst Albanian tribes, a girl could evade marriage by taking a vow of virginity, after which she took over male characteristics: she could dress as a man, associate with men on equal terms, carry guns. Again, a man who

99. S. de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (Harmondsworth 1972) 16.

100. Mamas' mother; Alypius' mother and maternal aunt; Hilarion's follower Konstantia, mother of a married daughter; Elisabeth, mother of John the Baptist; Mariam, sister of Aaron and Moses; Susannah, daughter of Helkion. Mamas (cited note 83) 133.18-134.10; Alypius, 189.3-30, 192.3-29; *Εἰς τὸν Ὅσιον καὶ Θεοφόρον πατέρα ἡμῶν καὶ θαυματουργὸν Ἱλαρίωνα ἐγκώμιον διὰ βραχέων*, ed. I.P. Tsiknopoullos (*Ἁγιοὶ τῆς Κύπρου* (cited note 88) 138-47) 145.20-24, 145.36-38; Annunciation (cited note 85) 252.252-.262; Odes (cited note 86) 129; Cod. Paris. Gr. 1317, fol. 175b.

In a parallel way, Neophytos' stress of virginity amounts to more than simple praise of sexual purity. It involves a removal of sexuality from the woman and indeed the assumption that she is not fully female. Her dreaded power residing in her sexuality, woman has been rendered powerless — therefore good. In a way not found in Neophytic stories of male saints, and in contrast to the post-ninth-century pattern of hagiography,<sup>105</sup> virginity in female saints becomes in Neophytos' narratives the most emphatic element of their sanctity — such as in the case of Marina<sup>106</sup> and Thekla.<sup>107</sup> Further, their examples are generalised to cover almost all female saints:

καὶ ὅρα τὴν παρεῦφημον Θέκλαν, τὴν πρωτομάρτυρα, καὶ τὰς μετόχους αὐτῆς παρθένους καὶ μάρτυρας, καὶ πάλιν τὰς ὁσίας παρθένους καὶ ἀσκητρίδας, πῶς μετὰ πόνων μαρτυρικῶν καὶ παλαισμάτων τὸ κάλλος τῆς παρθενίας ἐφαίδρυναν.<sup>108</sup>

Even though other means of achieving sanctity are acknowledged (Νεάνιδες γάρ παρθένοι καὶ ἄλλαι πλεῖσται γυναῖκες διὰ καθαρᾶς πολιτείας),<sup>109</sup> virginity is by far their most often praised qualification, placed higher than even the female saint's faith or martyrdom.

The 'καθαρά πολιτεία' to which Neophytos refers is meant to be a term descriptive of women who are not virgins, but who have become otherwise sexually unspecified: Hastrup's third state in woman's life cycle, woman devoid of sexuality, returning to

sexual unpecificity. This is achieved through old age, long widowhood, or long abstention from sexual activity. Thus it is important for Neophytos to mention that Anna was a widow for eighty-four years and that Susannah, Joachim's wife, εἴλετο μᾶλλον ἀποθανεῖν, ἢ διαφθεῖραι τὸ τῆς σοφροσύνης καλόν.<sup>110</sup> Both Anna and Susannah are described as 'σώφρων', an epithet which Neophytos usually reserves for men and which these women earned because of their unspecified sexual status — because, being no longer female, they acquire male characteristics. Similarly, Elisabeth's very advanced age and her miraculous (asexual) conception of John is repeatedly mentioned.<sup>111</sup> In the case of a female saint who has been married, great pains are taken to divorce her from her husband, and thus from sexual activity, by placing both of them in monasteries. Athanasia and Andronikos follow this path. They meet again twelve years later and live together until the end of their lives; but Athanasia has in the meantime overstepped her gender and become 'male': she dresses up in male clothes and changes her name to Athanasios. It is clear in the narrative that it is only after her transvestism that Athanasia acquires sanctity — not simply as an unspecified female, but rather as an assumed male, ἀρρενώσασα ὑπερφυῶς τὸ τοῦ θήλεος χαῦνον.<sup>112</sup>

Saintly women require not only a denial of sexuality (as is the case with male saints), but a denial of their very sex. In the light of which it is justified to conclude that Neophytos' 'good women' are 'good' precisely because they have ceased to be 'women'.

had no son, could direct one of his daughters to take the vow of virginity. She then became a 'son', the father bequeathing his house and land to her: M.E. Durham, *Some Tribal Origins, Laws and Customs of the Balkans* (London 1928) 194-5.

105. Post-ninth-century hagiography of female saints tends not to stress virginity (as was usual in earlier hagiographical models) but to emphasize other virtues — charity, love, humility, obedience — which to some extent replace it. See Laiou, 'Addendum to the Report on the Role of Women in Byzantine Society' (cited note 17) esp. 198-9.

106. Marina (cited note 88) 160-1.

107. Λόγος εἰς τὴν Παναγίαν Κόρην καὶ Θεομήτορα ὀπηνίκα ὑπὸ τῶν αὐτῆς γονέων ἐπεδόθη εἰς τὰ Ἅγια τῶν Ἁγίων τριετίζουσα, ed. E.M. Toniolo ('Omilie e Catechesi Mariane' (cited note 85) 210-36) 228.331-230.343; thereafter abbreviated to Mary at the Temple; Marina, 160.39-40.

108. Mary at the Temple, 228.331-333.

109. Mary at the Temple, 230.335-336.

110. Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 175b.

111. Annunciation (cited note 85) 252.252-262.

112. The relevant passage, from Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189, fols. 81b-83a, is too large to publish here, but characteristic extracts are the following: on meeting again after twelve years of separation: Καὶ ὁ μὲν Ἀνδρόνικος ἑαυτὸν ἐπανεῖπον, ἡ δὲ, Ἀθανάσιον ἑαυτὴν ἀπεκάλει. Ἀνδρείαν γὰρ στολὴν ἦν ἡμφιεσμένη, τὴν θηλείαν φύσιν παρακρύπτειν μηχανομένη, ἡ ἀρρενώσασα ὑπερφυῶς τὸ τοῦ θήλεος χαῦνον: fol. 82b. Neophytos himself repeatedly calls Athanasia by her assumed male name, e.g.: Καὶ ἕτερα δύο καὶ δέκα συμβιοτεύσαντες ἔτη, ὀνομαστὸν καὶ πανεύφημον τὸ ὄνομα ἦν Ἀνδρονίκου καὶ Αθανασίου (. . .) Μέγα ἦν τὸ κλέος Ἀνδρονίκου καὶ Ἀθανασίου, οὐχ ἁπλῶς διὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν, καὶ τὴν ἐπονυμίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὴν τῶν θαυμάτων πηγὴν: fol. 83a. On female transvestite saints, see Patlagean, 'L'Histoire de la Femme Déguisée en Moine' (cited note 1). For expressions of the female saint acquiring male characteristics, see John Chrysostom, Εἰς τὰς ἀγίας μάρτυρας Βερνίκην καὶ Προσδόκην παρθένους, MPG 50, 629-49, esp. 635.

Amongst Neophytos' good women an outstanding place is reserved for the Virgin Mary. It would be superfluous to describe here the pre-eminence of Mary, not just among female saints but amongst the entire pantheon of the Byzantines, who had, by the end of the sixth century, assigned to her the particularly important role of patron and protectress of Constantinople.<sup>113</sup>

The persona of Mary is composed of three elements: she is a virgin, a bride and a mother. In Neophytos it is her virginity which is most often praised. An apparently endless list of epithets referring to it crowd the folios of panegyrics or passages devoted to her.<sup>114</sup> Mary's virginal status would be a prerequisite for her sanctity, not only because of the connotations of sexual purity — which are repeatedly emphasised by Neophytos<sup>115</sup> — but also because of the way in which it de-sexualises her as a female.

However, the difference between Mary and other virgin female saints, is that not only is she a virgin, but has kept her virginity intact before, during and after giving birth. She is, as Neophytos reminds us in a great number of passages, not simply a

113. See N.H. Baynes, 'The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople', *AB* 67 (1949) 165-77; A. Cameron, 'The Theotokos in Sixth-Century Constantinople. A City Finds its Symbol', *The Journal of Theological Studies* 29/1 (1978) 79-108.

114. To take only one panegyric — an example, Mary's virginal status is asserted by her descriptions as ἀειπαρθένος, πανάχραντος, πανάμωμος, ἀγνή, πάναγνος, ὑπερκάθαρος, παρθένος, ἀγνή παρθένος, τὸ κλειθρον τῆς παρθενίας, τῆς παρθενίας τὸ κλέος παραμώμητος κόρη: Λόγος εἰς τὸ πάνσεπτον καὶ θεῖον γενέθλιον τῆς παναχράντου Δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας, ed. M. Jugie ('Homélies Mariales Byzantines', *PO* 16, fasc. 3 (Paris 1922) [104]-[108]) [104] .9-.10; [106] .20, .25; [107] .9, .12, .17, .26, .40, .41, .44; [108] .2-.5, .9, .12, .15, .20, .22, .27; thereafter abbreviated to Birth of Mary. Neophytos is of course not alone in his emphasis of Mary's perpetual virginity. See e.g. Romanos' poems On the Nativity I and II and his Stichera on the Nativity, and the Akathistos: *Romani Cantica Genuina* (cited note 15) 1-16; *Sancti Romani Melodi Cantica. Cantica Dubia*, ed. P. Maas and C.A. Trypanis (Berlin 1970) 164-71; thereafter abbreviated to *Romani Cantica Dubia*. For the Akathistos see *MPG* 92, 1335-48.

115. E.G.: Χριστὸς ἐκ παρθένου τεχθεὶς, ἐννομάτατον τόκον συν παρθενία φρονίμῳ ἄμφω τετίμηκεν. Ἐπεὶ γὰρ καὶ τόκος παράνομος γίνεται, καὶ μωρὰ παρθενία ἐν τισιν, ὥς φησὶ τὸ ἱερὸν εὐαγγέλιον πέφυκε. Χριστὸς ἐκ παρθένου ἀχράντου ὑπὲρ λόγον καὶ ἐννοίαν ἀποτίκτεται, ἵνα τὴν ἀχρηστίαν τοῦ τόκου τοῦ ἀσεβοῦς καὶ τῆς μωρᾶς παρθενίας καταργήσῃ τὸ ἀποπον: Cod. Lesb. Leim. 2, fol. 260a. Similarly: Σήμερον τῆς παρθενίας τὸ μέγεθος ἐκ παρθένου τεχθεὶς, Χριστὸς ἐφάνερωσε, καὶ διετράνωσε καὶ ἐγκωμίαςε τόδε τὸ χάρισμα τὸ πρὶν δυσκατόρθωτον. Ἦν γὰρ τὸ ἀγγελικὸν τοῦτο ἀξίωμα, ἀγνωστον ἀνθρώποις καὶ πρὸς κτήσιν ἀμήχανον. Ἀφ' οὗ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐκ παρθένου, γνωστόν ἡμᾶ καὶ ζηλευτὸν τῆς παρθενίας τὸ κάλ // λος ἐγένετο: Cod. Lesb. Leim. 2, fols. 261a-261b.

Θεοτόκος<sup>116</sup> but a Θεοτόκος Παρθενομήτωρ. That Mary conceived and gave birth and remained a virgin, is a cause of wonder for Neophytos. It is also clearly a crucial element in the myth of Mary<sup>117</sup> and Neophytos refers to it often, even in places where it is irrelevant to the context of the passage.<sup>118</sup> The fact that Mary, παρθένος οὕσα συνέλαβε καὶ τεκοῦσα πάλιν παρθένος ὥς πρό τοῦ τόκου μεμένηκε<sup>119</sup> is repeatedly mentioned by Neophytos and it is something which he admits as being inexplicable, ἀνεμύνηεντον.<sup>120</sup> Symeon becomes Neophytos' mouthpiece when the latter describes Symeon's reaction on seeing Mary and the child Christ: now, Symeon says, he can die content, for εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου καὶ παρθένον, μητέρα. To him this had appeared something impossible:

καὶ με ταύτην παρθένον ὁμοῦ καὶ μητέρα φανῆναι ἀδύνατον· εἰ μὲν παρθένος, οὐκ ἂν μήτηρ· εἰ δὲ μήτηρ, οὐκ ἂν παρθένος. Αὕτη δὲ καὶ παρθένος καὶ μήτηρ. ὦ μυστηρίου καινοῦ! ὦ θαύματος ξένου καὶ φρικτοῦ ἀληθῶς!<sup>121</sup>

Work in the field of social anthropology suggests that virgin birth is a cultural dogma found in many diverse cultures. Malinowski reported that the Trobriand islanders were wholly

116. The 'title' under which Mary's divine motherhood was officially promoted at the 431 Council of Ephesus; but which had already been present at the Council of Nicaea (325) and is attributed to Origen. See Graef, *Mary* (cited note 51) 46, 51-52; G. Miegge, *The Virgin Mary. The Roman Catholic Marian Doctrine* (London 1955) 53-67. Also Cameron, 'The Theotokos in Sixth-Century Constantinople' (cited note 113) 80, 87-88.

117. On the idea of Mary's perpetual virginity, which appears in the mid-second century Protoevangelion of James, and which had become established by the fourth century, see Graef, *Mary* (cited note 51) 12-19, 34 ff; Miegge, *The Virgin Mary* (cited note 116) 36-52; R. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk. Towards a Feminist Theology* (London 1983) 150-2.

118. While e.g., interpreting a passage referring to Christ, Neophytos unexpectedly refers to Mary's motherhood and virginity, and to how ἡ τεκοῦσα ἀλοχεύτως παρθένος, παρθένος πάλιν καὶ μετὰ τόκον μεμένηκεν: Cod. Athen. 522, fol. 410b.

119. Περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ Γαβριὴλ καὶ τῶν Εὐαγγελίων τῆς Θεομήτορος, ed. E.M. Toniolo ('Omilie ■ Catechesi Mariane' (cited note 85) 284-90) 286.61-62.

120. Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν βίον καὶ τὰ θαύματα τοῦ ὁσίου καὶ θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοσεβίου τοῦ Ἀραιοῦτου, ed. H. Delehaye ('Saints de Chypre' (cited note 66) 181-97) 185.31. Also in Cod. Paris. Suppl. Gr. 1317, fol. 13b. Again, a theme not exclusive to Neophytos. In Romanos' On the Nativity I and II, Mary herself wonders at the miracle of her preserved virginity: *Romani Cantica Genuina*, 2.β', 9α'-10β'; also: *Romani Cantica Dubia* 164-71, esp. 166i'.1 (cited note 15 and 114 respectively).

121. Cod. Lesb. Leim. 2, fol. 289a. Similarly in fol. 289b.

'ignorant of the physiological process of impregnation' and specifically of the need for male insemination of the female.<sup>122</sup> Leach believed that the Trobrianders were not expressing ignorance of physiological fact, but a cultural dogma in their assertion that every woman is impregnated by the holy spirit.<sup>123</sup> Irrespective of whether the Trobrianders were expressing ignorance or dogma, their belief of impregnation by the spirit is, as Leach points out,<sup>124</sup> comparable to the Christian dogma of Mary's impregnation by word of God, without the male intervening, ἄνευ πατρός, to quote Neophytos.<sup>125</sup>

Godly children that are conceived by virgins without the intervention of mortal fathers, are found throughout the world's cultures, the common characteristic underlining all cases being that both child and mother may become immortalised.<sup>126</sup> It is the very anomaly of the virgin mother, the defiance of classification in any one of the sexual categories employed to characterise woman's life-cycle which makes Mary such a strong bridge between the natural and the supernatural world, such a potent symbol of mediation.

The concept of mediation in this sense was clearly treated — if not equally clearly defined — by Lévi-Strauss. Based on Lévi-Strauss, Leach writes: 'in every myth-system we will find a persistent sequence of binary discriminations as between human/superhuman, mortal/immortal, male/female, legitimate/illegitimate, good/bad . . . followed by a 'mediation' of the paired categories thus distinguished. "Mediation" (in this

122. Though they were aware of the physiological causes of pregnancy in animals; and they accepted that the woman must first have sexual intercourse before she can be impregnated by the holy spirit (baloma): B. Malinowski, *The Family Among the Australian Aborigines* (London 1913); *idem*, *The Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Melanesia* (London 1932) 145-66; *idem*, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays* (New York 1954) 215-37. Roth reported similarly that Australian aborigine tribes of North Central Queensland ignored the causal connection between copulation and pregnancy: W.E. Roth, 'Superstition, Magic and Medicine', *North Queensland Ethnographic Bulletin* 5 (Brisbane 1903) 22.

123. E.R. Leach, 'Virgin Birth', *Proceedings of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* (1966) 39-49.

124. *Ibid.*, esp. 41-43. See also Hastrup, 'The Semantics of Biology: Virginity' (cited note 101) 61-62.

125. Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189, fol. 203b.

126. See Leach, 'Virgin Birth' (cited note 123) esp. 41-42; Lévi-Strauss, 'The Structural Study of Myth', in *Structural Anthropology* (cited note 60) 206-31.

sense) is always achieved by introducing a third category which is "abnormal" or "anomalous" in terms of ordinary "rational" categories. Thus myths are full of fabulous monsters, incarnate gods, virgin mothers. This middle ground is abnormal, non-natural, holy. It is typically the focus of all taboo and ritual observance'.<sup>127</sup>

What precise context this symbol will have been created to occupy,<sup>128</sup> and what different forms and variations it will subsequently assume, will depend on the particular social conditions surrounding it at a specific point in time. The myth of the Virgin Mary has assumed numerous forms and aspects,<sup>129</sup> but the power of the sexual anomaly of the Virgin-Mother as a symbol of mediation between humans and their God remained intact, at least in the Orthodox tradition. It probably helps to explain Mary's success as a cult figure, with specific reference to her mediating prowess. Cameron, who explains the rise of the cult of the Virgin in the sixth century as a means of restoring unity in a badly shaken society, recognises mediation as the most emphatic aspect of Mary.<sup>130</sup> Cameron explains why the cult of

127. Lévi-Strauss, 'The Structural Study of Myth', above; Leach, 'Genesis as Myth' (cited note 11) esp. 32. See also Leach, 'Virgin Birth', above, esp. 41-42. M. Douglas, 'Animals in Lele Religious Symbolism', in *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology* (London and Boston 1975) 27-46 (reprinted from *Africa* 27 (January 1957) esp. 35-38) shows how a 'mediator' (in this case an 'abnormal' animal mediating between animals and humans) may become the focus of religious cult practise. For an application of the principle ideas discussed above within a social-historical context, see M. Beard, 'The Sexual Status of the Vestal Virgins', *JRS* 70 (1980) 12-27.

128. M. Douglas developed the concept of ambiguity or interstitiality, whereby interstitial beings (i.e. which partake of more than one cultural category or state) are declared to be dangerous, powerful, holy. She thought that ambiguity or interstitiality is based on a system of binary opposites created between the natural and the man-made. Subsequent anthropological work, however, points out that all types of ambiguity are cultural constructions, man-made opposites creating an abnormality in order that it fulfills a certain function. See Tambiah, 'Animals Are Good to Think and Good to Prohibit' (cited note 59); R. Bulmer, 'Why the Cassowary is not a Bird', in *Rules and Meanings: The Anthropology of Everyday Knowledge*, ed. M. Douglas (Harmondsworth 1973) 167-93 (reprinted from *Man* 2/1 (1967) 5-25). For an application of interstitiality in a historical context see Beard, above.

129. See Graef, *Mary* (cited note 51); M. Jugie, *La Mort et l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge*, Studi e Testi, 114 (Rome 1944) esp. 506-82 (a more restricted but also more thorough study); Miegge, *The Virgin Mary* (cited note 116); M. Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex. The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London 1976) (useful but flawed by errors).

130. Cameron, 'The Theotokos in Sixth-Century Constantinople' (cited note 113) 103-8.



a mediator rose when it did; but she does not explain why this cult centred on a woman and not on one of the already powerful male intercessors of the — after all, patriarchal — christian pantheon. Cameron's assertion that the Virgin Mary's role had 'little specifically to do with her sex but much more to do with her position as a mediator',<sup>131</sup> overlooks the possibility that it was precisely Mary's sex — and the ambiguities with which it had been endowed — that was the most decisively important ingredient in her make up as The Great Mediator.

The ambiguity of the Virgin-Mother is further emphasised by Mary's role as a bride. In this role, she is the bride of her son, as she is also the bride of God the Father. References to her in this capacity are too numerous to leave any doubt as to the cultural significance of this characteristic of Mary. While other good women are also 'brides of Christ' or God, Mary is the only one who is the bride of her son<sup>132</sup> and of the father, too.<sup>133</sup> In this capacity, Mary is not only sexually ambiguous in a personal sense, as in the mother-virgin situation. She is now ambiguous in an overtly social sense. She in fact moves over and above that pivotal expression of the kinship structure, the taboo of incest. Mary is the bride (that is to say, the lover) of both the Father (through whose word she conceived) and of the Son. The ambiguity, further elaborated by the christian conception of the Father and the Son as two distinct and yet identical entities, is complete.

Mary partakes of more than one of the categories with which the christian mind had structured its universe: on a sexual level, she is both a virgin (a sexually unspecified creature, a less than female woman) and a mother (a sexually unambiguous, fertile woman); on the level of social kinship, she is both the mother of a son and the bride of that same son: both, further, a bride

131. *Ibid.* 106.

132. Mary at the Temple (cited note 107) 218.145-155; 220.181-182; 234.420-423; Cod. Lesb. Leim. 2, fol. 290a; Annunciation (cited notes 85) 262.405-406; Εἰς τὸ πάνσεπτον καὶ θεῖον γενέθλιον τῆς παρμώμου Κόρης καὶ Θεομήτορος, ed. E.M. Toniolo ('Omilie ■ Catechesi Mariane' (cited note 85) 296-8) 296.21-298.37; Εἰς τὴν εἰσοδὸν τὴν ἐν τῷ ναῷ τῆς Θεομήτορος, ed. E.M. Toniolo (*ibid.*, 300-2) 300.20-22; Psalms (cited note 86) 51, Ψ.ΜΔ'.

133. See e.g. Birth of Mary (cited note 114) [106].40-[107].7; [107].44-[108].2; Λόγος εἰς τὴν πάνσεπτον Κοίμησιν τῆς πανάγνου Δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας, ed. E.M. Toniolo ('Omilie e Catechesi Mariane' (cited note 85) 264-82) 264.21; 270.124.

of the son and of the father. The creation of not only one ambiguity but of an entire structure of such; the tension caused by any attempt to understand Mary's persona according to any accepted social categories; the impossibility of placing Mary in the sexual or social context with which Neophytos was familiar: all combine to make Mary an extremely powerful symbol. As such, she could either have been understood by Neophytos as a mythical, man made, cultural creation; or accepted fully and unquestionably as holy, whose attributes cannot be found in ordinary men. Power acting through culture, Church and State control and ideology, ruled out the first possibility and forced the second: Mary was declared the Παναγία, the All Holy.

There can be no overestimation of the power exercised by Mary over Neophytos. Of his surviving works, three panegyrics and nine homilies are exclusively written for her, while in a great number of his other writings substantial passages are devoted to her. Apart from this very large presence, Mary's impact on Neophytos becomes apparent in the way in which she figures in passages which are not directly related to her and even appears unexpectedly in passages where the subject matter is quite irrelevant to her; while on other occasions she is given an importance quite disproportionate to the general context of the narrative.

It is as a mediator that Neophytos addresses her most often. In one passage, Neophytos advises his monks to learn by heart a prayer and to say it if the devil appears before them. The prayer is an invocation to God to save the monk from the devil, 'through the intercession of your ever-virginal and immaculate mother'.<sup>134</sup> Later in the same narrative, Neophytos urges the monks to venerate the icon of the Virgin, in order to be safeguarded from Satan.<sup>135</sup> Another example of Neophytos' extreme veneration of Mary comes from his instructions that the Typikon should be read by the monks three times a year, on important days when all the monks would be present at the monastery. Two out of these three most important days of the year mark feast days of Mary (her birth and the Annunciation) and only one of

134. Λόγος περὶ πινος μοναχοῦ ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ, ed. H. Delehay (‘Saints de Chypre’ (cited note 66) 162-75) 163.24-30.

135. *Ibid.* 164.2-4.

Christ (Christmas).<sup>136</sup> Mary is again invoked to mediate between the monks and God.<sup>137</sup>

But it is in a tract called Θεοσημία, in many ways the most 'personal' of Neophytos' writings, that the veneration of Mary, over and above that of Christ or God, becomes strikingly apparent. In this work, Neophytos describes his spontaneous reaction in times of what he conceived to be mortal danger (when a rock fell on him). This was to call out first for Mary's help, and only later for Christ's. Neophytos himself was struck by this breach of the patriarchal order of address: 'and I immediately cried out and said, "Our Lady, help me! Christ, help me!"; for the great urgency of my need did not leave even a trace of the correct order, so as to call the Lord first — but I called the Lady first . . .'.<sup>138</sup> It is to Mary that he believes he owes his escape from death. It is worth pointing out that his description of her as πανταχοῦ παροῦσα καὶ τὰ πάντα πληροῦσα is one customarily reserved for God: 'Then the ever-present and all-doing and non-delaying grace came to me quicker than a flash and delivered my soul from death'.<sup>139</sup> In the doxology which he composed to celebrate his saving, Mary appears very prominently, with a whole *kontakion* devoted to her, Neophytos again recording that it was her name which his 'tongue and heart' uttered first in time of danger.<sup>140</sup> Her attributes as efficient and instant saviour of the faithful are emphasised here, as they are also present in the songs (στιχηρά ἰδιόμελα) which Neophytos composed prescribing that they should be sung outside the recluse's cell during the liturgy commemorating his saving.<sup>141</sup>

Does Mary achieve the status of goddess, then? Not quite. Mary's role as a mediator expresses the power of her position; but it also hints at her limitations: she is not human, but neither is she God. She is somewhere between the two. Orthodox theology very clearly marks the distinction between the Trinity and Mary.

136. Typikon (cited note 71) 81.13-19.

137. *Ibid.*, 103.29-31.

138. Τῆς Θεοσημίας ἡ μνήμη, ed. Archimandrite Kyprianos (cited note 16) 34-53, reprinted by I.H. Hadjiioannou (cited note 16) 137-50 and 150-6) 142.27-31; thereafter abbreviated to Theosemia. See also Mango and Hawkins, 'The Hermitage of Saint Neophytos' (cited note 5) 124-6.

139. Theosemia, 142.31-33.

140. *Ibid.* 147.7-12.

141. *Ibid.* 154.27-28; 155.6-10; 155.16-18; 155.23-28.

A special word, λατρεία, is reserved for the veneration of God, while for that of Mary words (such as δουλεία, προσκύνησις, ὑπερδουλεία) of lesser status are prescribed. Mary is officially venerated not in isolation but within the context of her maternal relationship to Christ. She is venerated, officially, precisely on account of her son.<sup>142</sup>

So embedded is christian dogma in Neophytos, that despite his obvious personal preference for Mary over any other female or male of the christian pantheon, he submits to the dogma, patriarchal and intense, and repeatedly reminds his reader (and perhaps himself) that Mary occupies a lesser place than Christ. In the panegyric of Theosevios, he stresses that it was Christ who kept Mary a virgin after she had given birth, thus attributing one of Mary's most powerful characteristics to Christ.<sup>143</sup> The clearest statement of Mary's subservience to Christ, Neophytos places in the lips of Anna, who says on seeing Mary and her infant son at the Temple:

Αὐτὸς ἐποίησε τὴν παροῦσαν παρθένον, οὐχ' ἡ παρθένος αὐτόν. Ἔστη γὰρ τοῦτου καὶ μήτηρ καὶ δούλη, δι' οὗ καὶ παρθένος καὶ μήτηρ τῶν πάντων καινότατον. Οὗτος δὲ ταύτης καὶ υἱὸς καὶ δεσπότης διὰ πολλὴν συγκατάβασιν. Αὐτὸς ἐποίησε τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηράν.<sup>144</sup>

The idea is thus projected whereby it is Christ who, so to speak, gave birth to Mary, not she to him.<sup>145</sup> It is an idea more strongly expressed in another passage of Neophytos, whereby Mary's achievement of virgin birth and conception without the intervention of a male, is cancelled out by the idea of Christ having been born directly from the Father, without a mother:

παιδίον ἐγεννήθη ἡμῖν ἐκ παρθένου ἁγίας ἄνευ πατρός, τό ἐκ γαστρὸς πρὸ Ἑωσφόρου ἐκ τοῦ πατρός γεννηθὲν ἄνευ μητρός.<sup>146</sup>

142. This is Church dogma, and it is also frequently expressed in the very doxologies that glorify Mary. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (Harmondsworth 1980) 262; Graef, *Mary* (cited note 51) 181-201, 322 ff.

143. Theosevios (cited note 120) 185.30-32. For another expression of this dogma see *Romani Cantica Genuina* (cited note 15) 9-16, esp. 9-10a'.

144. Cod. Lesb. Leim. 2, fol. 291b. Similarly, Romanos depicts Mary addressing Christ as 'my son, my maker, my saviour': *Romani Cantica Genuina*, 9κδ'.9.

145. An example of 'false naming' similar to that which has Eve being 'born' of Adam. See Daly, *Beyond God the Father* (cited note 11) 47; Spender, *Man Made Language* (cited note 11) 166.

146. Cod. Paris. Gr. 1189, fol. 203b. A tradition going back to the fourth century.

Tactfully, almost quietly, in the passages above Neophytos divests Mary of the extremes of power which would have turned her into a goddess, by showing that her power, such as it is, is due solely to God. Gently but firmly, Mary joins the ranks which patriarchy had prescribed for her sex, secondary to a male God.

This is, of course, not surprising. For, as I hope I have shown, Neophytos' conception of the female sex was both varied and constant. Varied, in that it assumed many different forms: the powerful (hence evil) female; the good (hence asexual) woman; the archetypal sinful Eve; Mary the Virgin Mother. Constant, in that these apparently contradictory forms were all constructed according to patriarchal prescription. Sometimes consciously, but mostly unconsciously, Neophytos both reproduced and helped perpetuate the social-cultural reality of his times. In this essay, I have tried to illustrate one of the ways in which he experienced and expressed the social conception of female gender, and hence the ways in which the 'common sense' of his culture operated.

*University of Birmingham  
Centre for Byzantine Studies &  
Modern Greek*

See Graef, *Mary* (cited note 51) 50; and compare the powerful Mary of the second century apocryphal 'Odes of Solomon': she gives birth 'As if she were a man, Of her own will, And she brought Him forth openly, And acquired Him in great power . . .': Graef, *Mary*, 35.

## 'Jargon' vs. 'the Facts'? Byzantine History-Writing and Contemporary Debates

JOHN HALDON

### I

In recent years 'theory' has been much debated in journals devoted to, among other areas of study, literary and historical research. Depending on your outlook, theory is seen either as of positive value to an advance in the understanding of a particular problem or set of problems; or as an irritating irrelevance, indeed a hindrance, to the progress of good research work. Many 'theorists', certainly, have gone to the extreme of dismissing empirical historical research as itself irrelevant, founded upon epistemologically indefensible premises and hence misleading if not worthless. While such views are hardly designed to encourage serious engagement with theoretical issues, it is the polarisation of positions of which they are symptoms that I would like to look at in what follows. This article is an overview that will deal in basics. I want to look at the role theoretical debate has taken in historiography generally, and in the area of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies in particular, and the attitudes of its practitioners.

To begin with, I would like to suggest some reasons for the gulf which exists between those who wish to employ or to invoke theoretical work more explicitly in their research and those who resist or object to this tendency; and to look at the often bone-headed refusal of either 'side' to sympathise with the alternative standpoint. This polarisation is in itself a product of the highly-charged emotional nature of the debate, in which personal pride and academic identity have become inseparably bound together — perhaps inevitably. But my comments are informed by the con-

tention that theoretically-informed interpretative work is essential, and that, therefore, familiarity with the philosophical context of one's work, and the ability to situate it within the terms of a wider cultural discourse, is likewise essential. But I should also like to emphasise that this need not, and indeed must not, take place at the expense of careful empirical research, nor should it take the form of an eclectic juxtaposing of a variety of elements from different perspectives. In other words, I want to stress that 'theory' cannot be tacked on to a pre-existing body of material in the vague hope that this will provide it with a degree of intellectual credibility. Theory, that is, sets of premises which condition both the mode of interpretation as well as the mode of appropriation of knowledge, is implicit in any piece of analysis, whether this is of 'historical' sources or 'literary' texts. Theory, in one form or another, is inescapable. The point appears to be in making theorising explicit, in order to eliminate as far as possible the inconsistencies and contradictions inevitable in intuitive reasoning. And in this respect, of course, 'theory' is highly desirable. For it is impossible to analyse cultures outside our own without providing some formal basis upon which to interpret and evaluate the data. Certainly, it is sometimes possible to arrive at a more or less 'accurate' *description* of relationships within our own, experienced culture on the basis of what linguists and anthropologists refer to as 'member intuition' (although this must then, since intuitive, always remain a 'matter of opinion', and hence liable to purely subjective contradiction). But it is quite another matter to transfer this approach to other cultures, whether in time or space, if only because the relationships of cause and effect which the data might evoke or represent are neither experienced (and are therefore not accessible to intuitive deduction) nor visible (and are therefore not open to simple description).

One of the most obvious characteristics of current debates has been the sometimes vituperative exchanges between proponents of one school of thought or another, whether among 'theorists' or between 'theorists' and 'non-theorists'. This usually takes the form of dismissive comments about the 'naïve empiricism' of positivist research programmes on the one hand; or the irritated dismissal of theoretical work as full of incomprehensible jargon and abstractions of no practical value whatever. Such extreme views are not always expressed in writing, but they are regularly

to be heard among adherents of both tendencies at conferences, in senior common rooms, and similar academic social gatherings. From the point of view of the 'non-theorists', there is an understandable annoyed irritation at the facile assumption made by some who invoke theoretical work that, because many historians may have avoided complex abstract and philosophical debate, they are therefore denying the validity of such debate or are ignorant of its appropriateness. Equally, of course, there is a strongly empiricist anti-theoretical element, particularly in Britain, which has quite justifiably been the target of much criticism. But the terms of the debate have only rarely been spelled out, and this has served to encourage the refusal of both theorists and non-theorists alike to open a meaningful dialogue or venture beyond polemic.

This is unfortunate, to say the least, but it is by no means accidental. It reflects to a large degree both the historical development of western 'science' and the emphasis, particularly in the English-language tradition since the eighteenth century, on empirical and experimental work (in the sense common to the natural sciences). But if theory is to be of value to historical research and teaching at all, it is necessary for those involved to engage with the problems it raises.<sup>1</sup> And for this to happen in our fields on a wider scale than has hitherto been the case (with a few exceptions), it is necessary for the debate between the two tendencies outlined above to be accessible and to encourage discussion and engagement. I am not concerned with the social psychology of those academics who reject all forms of 'new-fangled' theory and 'jargon' out of hand; but I do want to outline, albeit very briefly, the main differences in epistemology on which the debate, as well as the misunderstandings and disagreements, have thrived; and hence suggest possible ways towards a more fruitful approach to common problems by both 'sides'. I should perhaps also point out that these tendencies are not always very clearly defined nor as easily identified as they might appear from the foregoing. Only in the context of specific debates do they take on a certain solidity, and even then the lines between theory and non- or anti-theory remain very fluid indeed.

1. Note the remarks of a recent commentator: G. McLennan, 'History and Theory: contemporary debates and directions', *Literature and History* 10 (1984) 139-164.

## II

I will begin with an attempt to describe some of the key elements in the field of history which have given rise to debate since the 1950s. 'History' is itself, of course, subject to varying definition. Here I shall use it in the broadest sense: to represent the sum of a range of methods and specific approaches in the study of the past, including the history of art and cultural production in general, the study of the role of symbolic representation in belief and practice, of the structure and transformation of social formations, as well as of political and institutional developments and life, and so on. Historians — whether they see themselves as of politics, art, institutions, laws, society in general, ideas or whatever, and whatever the specialist methods they need for their research (and these are clearly many) — are all concerned with the human past, and in this respect their work necessarily implies a general as well as a specialised perspective. And it is this which makes the theoretical debates, however distanced or abstract they might appear, so directly relevant to empirical research.

The debates and tendencies referred to above did not first develop in the 1950s, of course, neither was a tension between 'theory' and empirical 'research' first noted at this time. But the 1950s and early 1960s did see the beginnings of the fragmentation of what had been, to a greater or lesser degree, a fairly unified tradition, marked by the dominance of an empiricist, humanist consensus throughout the social and historical sciences. This does not mean that there had been a total absence of alternatives, however. In history, for example, the development of the *Annales* tradition during the 40s and 50s; and the existence of a variety of Marxist approaches, left plenty of epistemological doors ajar. But it was only during the later 50s that these alternatives, and the variations they produced; together with an upsurge in sociological and social-anthropological approaches, pushed them wide open. The old consensus was broken, but it retained a good deal of its power and authority, and does so today, if only because many historians trained in its traditions continue to pass on their methods and their values to their students. What exactly were the chief characteristics of this tradition?

I can only present a summary here, of course, with a warning that summaries tend to involve some over-simplification and to ignore some of the variations and idiosyncracies within the general

scheme. And it might in fact be best to begin with some general definitions, for the abundance of technical terms involved in the sort of debate with which we are concerned is itself frequently discouraging. At the same time, an over-zealous use of such terms, or a misunderstanding of the appropriateness of their use, has unfortunately produced sometimes reasonable hostility to their appearance under any circumstances! While I would hope that the majority of those concerned with Byzantine and modern Greek studies are familiar with them, it seems worthwhile outlining very briefly the values assumed for them generally, and the contexts within which they are usually employed. This might appear to many to be a superfluous (and inevitably rather superficial) exercise, but I think it serves a useful purpose. Indeed, clearing the ground for a better-natured, better-informed debate requires the clarification of arguments with and about 'technical' terms — words — and I want to commence by arguing for a scrupulousness and consistency in their usage by all parties. Having read this, or similar discussions, I hope it will no longer be possible for an advanced case of discourse-theory to dismiss all empirical work as empiricist, nor for 'traditional' scholarship to dismiss theory as 'jargon' because it happens not to be part of its homespun philosophy!

Terms such as empiricism, rationalism, idealism, realism and so forth litter the pages of theoretical discussion; and if only to make my own points more clearly, a brief catalogue follows. I shall probably be teaching many grandmothers to suck eggs, but I hope that it will nevertheless be a useful starting-point.

*Empiricism* refers to a particular set of theories of knowledge. It posits a real world, independent of thought or consciousness, accessible through perception or experience. But 'common-sense' empiricism has tended to reduce ontology to epistemology. Every theory of knowledge has an implied ontology, that is, a theory of what the world is like and of what exists in it. For empiricism, anything that is real must be available to perception or experience. Often, however, in making this the only criterion of reality, what *can* be known is collapsed into what *is*. For empiricism, therefore, the world is defined as constituted by facts given as the objects of experience. A fundamental premise of this epistemology, of course, has to be the conscious, knowing subject, that is to say, the human subject who perceives and experiences and thereby



validates knowledge. And it is the function and constitution of this unproblematic (for empiricism) subject which has been at the centre of critiques of empiricist theory or assumptions. But empiricist thinkers have been aware of some of these problems since the eighteenth century, and a variety of sophisticated attempts to resolve them has been offered.<sup>2</sup>

*Positivism* is a more limited and more rigid development of empiricism, at least in its basic forms. It contends that knowledge can only be obtained by methods used in the natural science, or at least based upon similar methodological guidelines. It regards the availability of objects in the world to subjective experience and to perception as the only source of knowledge. Again, at its core lies the assumption of, and necessity for, a 'knowing subject'.

*Idealism*, like empiricism, was a development of the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and was primarily an attempt to resolve the dualism inherent in Cartesian rationalism. In opposition to empiricism, idealism made mental constructs the basis of knowledge of the world, constructs which were seen as the creation of the free human mind. *Rationalism*, as developed by Descartes ('I think, therefore I am'), posited a dualism of mind and matter, in which mind, rather than the senses, is the only sure element, the only knower of external things. More recently, rationalism and scientific *conventionalism* have returned to their Cartesian roots, so to speak — albeit in a much developed form — to challenge empiricism in the social and historical sciences.

2. For example, in the field of history, C. Hempel's 'covering law model', and Popper's development of a 'hypothetico-deductive' method. See in particular K. R. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London 1974); C. G. Hempel, *Aspects of Scientific Explanation and Other Essays in the Philosophy of Science* (New York 1965) (including a re-edition of the original paper of 1943); and see also M. Mandelbaum, 'The Problem of "Covering Laws"', in: P. Gardiner, ed., *The Philosophy of History* (Oxford 1974) 51-65 (orig. in *History and Theory* 1 (1961) 229-242) for further discussion and bibliography. The best general survey of all these movements and philosophical problems, except for the most recent, is still Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy* (new edn., London 1961). For good general accounts of empiricist, positivist and rationalist approaches to the problem of reality and knowledge, but from a critical realist perspective, see Roy Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science* (Brighton 1978); *idem*, *The Possibility of Naturalism: a Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences* (Brighton 1979); R. Harré, *Philosophies of Science: an Introductory Survey* (Oxford 1972); and see esp. D. Hillel-Ruben, *Marxism and Materialism* (Brighton 1979); G. McLennan, *Marxism and the Methodologies of History* (London 1981).

*Conventionalism*, elaborated chiefly in the work of T.S. Kuhn and his adherents<sup>3</sup>, maintains that sense-perception and experience themselves depend upon 'theory', that is, implicit assumptions about the world. Thus, what is perceived depends upon sets of pre-given suppositions. Knowledge cannot be validated by experience, since this is itself determined by assumptions, thus begging the questions it should answer. For conventionalism, therefore, the world is effectively constructed in and through 'theory'. But an obvious criticism is that, since there is no objective means of choosing between theories, and our only access to any external reality is through a series of theories which describe it in mutually exclusive terms, the idea of reality as an independent state external to human subjectivity becomes irrelevant. While correctly recognising that knowledge is socially constructed, the implications of conventionalism mean that reality is determined solely by theory — the opposite of naive empiricism — and that there are as many realities as there are theories.

Finally, *realism*. Realism in its more recent manifestations (sometimes called neo-realism) is perhaps best described as an attempt at a solution to both empiricist and conventionalist difficulties. It displays elements of both. On the one hand, it insists upon acknowledgement of a real world, external to human experience, which is not reducible to language or theory, but which is nevertheless knowable. It maintains, on the other hand, that knowledge is socially constructed, and that language and experience are socially/culturally determined; that is, in conventionalist terms, that they are theory-impregnated. And yet the task of knowledge is to produce knowledge of the real, ontologically independent world, and not simply sets of logical, internally-consistent theories referring inwards and not outwards, as in conventionalism. To obtain knowledge of the real, therefore, realism adopts a 'correspondence-theory'. In contrast to conventionalism, which needs no such theory because it posits no independent reality to which its theories must correspond; and in contrast to empiricism, which conflates 'reality' with the empirical world as it is perceived at the level of experience (of

3. See T. S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago 1970); and the debate between Kuhn on the one hand, and those who followed Popper, in: I. Lakatos, A. Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge 1970). For realist critiques of conventionalism, see the references in note 2 above.

observation and/or experiment), the theories which realism generates relate to the ontological structures which give rise to the perceptible phenomena of the world. Theories explain *phenomena* because the latter and the structures which generate them are causally connected. For realism, therefore, reality is *not* the same as that which can be empirically observed or deduced from observation. But reality does have effects, and it is precisely the connection between surface (what can be observed) and depth which makes access to the 'real' possible.<sup>4</sup> In this respect, Marxism is a realism — although there have been both empiricist and idealist (and more recently conventionalist) interpretations, and as many claims to represent 'what Marx really meant' — in my view a singularly pointless exercise — as there have been philosophical positions on the question of the relationship between 'reality' and perception.

Much more could be said about all of these philosophical tendencies, and I have hardly done justice to any of them. But in spite of the considerable oversimplification, I hope that some notion of the fundamental questions at issue has been given which will set the account of the debates to follow in a more readily understandable context.

### III

To return, therefore, to the empiricist-humanist consensus which has in the last twenty-five or so years begun to fragment. The main feature of this tradition in historiography has been, as might be expected, an assumption that the past is to be taken as unproblematic, and that it is or was ontologically real. The historian's job is to describe that erstwhile reality. In this approach, a slide between believing that the past is real and believing that the past is directly apprehensible is often made — the former a sort of naive realist approach, the latter more properly empiricist. There is no inevitable connection between the two, although they are embodied implicitly in the method of many historians. Both have been, whether in their cruder or their more sophisticated forms, the object of fierce criticism from other

4. See the work of Bhaskar, Hillel-Ruben and McLennan cited in note 2 above. Also the essays in: J. Mepham, D. Hillel-Ruben, eds., *Issues in Marxist Philosophy* III: *Epistemology, Science, Ideology* (Brighton 1979).

perspectives. But it should be stressed that some empiricist historiography has been both spirited in its own defence and sophisticated, as has been pointed out (although regularly played down by critics<sup>5</sup>); and that very few historians within this tradition would agree that they directly apprehend the past. Rather, they trace elements from the past through their evidence, which can then be processed into plausible accounts. Historians of all traditions would probably agree that they work within a particular set of references which determines the object of study, the period, the source materials; as well as the interpretational possibilities, and the comparative and analogical assumptions which condition the direction of research and its conclusions. This framework in itself provides, implicitly or explicitly, a higher-order theory in the completed piece of research. For the initial sets of references themselves are subject to certain tendencies, and while they are present in any piece of historiographical work, their combined effect will vary according to whether fundamentally empiricist, realist or other assumptions about the nature of evidence and the construction of knowledge of the past have determined them. The problem for empiricist approaches lies in the fact that the determining role of the historian's own assumptions is ignored or denied; that is to say, the 'facts' are generally regarded as unalterably constituted by the past or in the past. While the historian might work up the narrative and causal sequences embodied in these discreet pieces of evidence, the latter is itself a constant which can be added to, partially ignored, or omitted, but not changed. Such an assumption is crucial, of course. For if historians ignore the constitutive role which they themselves play in both determining and selecting evidence, and then ignore the role played by their own cultural assumptions in defining the nature and type of causal relationships (for example) they can perceive, then they are in danger of reproducing in their historical narratives perpetually self-reproducing models of their own culture (or what they are able to perceive of it). This is precisely the danger that the Historicist movement of the later nineteenth and early twentieth century sought to avoid. The failure to 'theorise', to make explicit the epistemological principles upon

5. See McLennan's discussion, *Marxism and the Methodologies of History* (cited note 2 above) esp. 66ff., 97ff.

which historical analysis is based, is not, of course, necessarily inherent in empiricist thinking itself. It is rather a preference, a traditional attitude which has become entrenched over a number of generations. For abstractions have come to be regarded as distractions from what is seen to be the main task of collecting, ordering and processing the data, the facts, which can alone provide knowledge of the past. Indeed, a fundamental contradiction has often been assumed between 'history' on the one hand and 'theory' on the other. This has led to a position in which 'history' becomes a unique experience apprehensible only through the historian's immersion in the text and sources of the period, for which a 'feeling' is cultivated and which becomes itself ■ guiding principle in the interpretative method. This characteristic, understandably but not entirely fairly dismissed by critics as 'humanist', appears today as a dominant element in British, and indeed in much western European and north American historiographical literature. And it reinforces the hostility to theoretical abstraction.<sup>6</sup> The result has been a clash of incompatibles, and a refusal to accept the validity of criticism, based on little more than a conviction that theorising, since it does not

6. For some general remarks, see McLennan, *Marxism and the Methodologies of History*, 97-111. There are, of course, many elements within this basic paradigm, some of the representatives of which would certainly take issue with this rather rough-and-ready description. The rigorous approach of German positivism as exemplified by Ranke; the historicists' emphasis on a relativist interpretative method (not totally dissimilar in its implications to, although radically different in its methods from, Levi-Straussian structuralism); more recent debates within philosophy of history on the problems of the possibility of the generation of historical/sociological laws (returning to the debate rekindled by Hempel and Dray, for example) and so on, all point to the flourishing debate and the fundamental awareness of the epistemological difficulties inherited from the empiricist/positivist tradition by modern non-Marxist historiography. There is a wide literature. For further discussion and bibliography, see: K.-H. Lembeck, 'Die Gültigkeit historischen Wissens: zum Zusammenhang von Geschichtstheorie und Geschichtstheologie bei Ernst Troeltsch', *Saeculum* 33 (1982) 103-208; H. Schnädelbach, *Geschichtsphilosophie seit Hegel. Die Probleme des Historismus* (Freiburg/München 1974); and note the other contributions in *Saeculum* 33 (1982), esp. O. Marquard, 'Universalgeschichte und Multiversalgeschichte', 106-115. For general surveys see M. Mandelbaum, *The Anatomy of Historical Knowledge* (Baltimore 1977), P. Gardiner, *The Philosophy of History* (cited noted 2 above). On historicism in particular, see Lembeck, *art.cit.*, and, of course, F. Meinecke, *Die Entstehung des Historismus* (München 1936); also M. Mandelbaum, *History, Man, and Reason* (Baltimore 1971) 42-9, 113ff.

appear to be based on facts, must therefore be entirely subjective, and is both useless and misleading.<sup>7</sup>

#### IV

Before going on to look at more recent developments within this broadly-defined empiricist tradition, we ought to examine some of the alternatives. The difficulty here is that many such alternatives in fact share some of the epistemological assumptions of the empiricist tendency described above, or at least fall into some of the same traps. Others can do so, depending on how the problem of the 'past' is approached, but do not necessarily have to do so. For the sake of argument (and clarity), I will divide these alternatives into three broad groups: those which fall generally within a Marxist or historical materialist perspective; those which might be identified with the *Annales* tradition; and the much more recent structuralist and post-structuralist critiques. All these have elements in common. There exists a variety of emphases within each. All have benefited from dialogue with one another, whatever the (often fierce) criticisms they may have generated. And all have in various ways been critical of the purely fact-based and unreflective interrogation of sources which has characterised the empiricist or positivist tradition.

Marxist approaches are perhaps the most difficult to describe, partly because the term has been regularly misused, and partly because the variations in emphasis are so considerable. No attempt to summarise all these differences in detail will be made here. Three main trends, however, can be picked out, all founded ultimately in the enormous volume of Marx's work; as well as owing something to challenges from non-Marxist historiography and from within Marxist — historical materialist — practice itself. On the one hand, a tendency to economic reductionism, with ■ heavy emphasis on the productive forces and their potential for breaking down outmoded relations of production, as well as upon the 'base-superstructure' model, has been responsible both for encouraging a closer analysis of social and economic relations

7. The two extremes are perhaps best summed up in B. Hindess and P.Q. Hirst, *Mode of Production and Social Formation* (London 1977) — a conventionalist dismissal of all history as inevitably empiricist; and J. Hexter's rather contemptuous dismissal of all theorising in *The History Primer* (London 1972).

and at the same time for promoting a caricature of Marxist approaches to history.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, structuralist marxisms have exercised a critique of such approaches as well as of traditional liberal historiography, and have tended to re-emphasise both the culturally-constitutive nature of social relations and the unity of social structure, demoting thereby the base-superstructure model and the central position of the creative human producer. Parallel to these has emerged — although it has a long tradition behind it — a rigorously realist materialist critique of both tendencies, critical of the teleology and reductionism of the first, and of the mechanical, synchronic and ultimately idealist implications of the second. This is not to say that versions of the former have not been both sophisticated and immensely thought-provoking, nor that the second can be identified just with the work of Althusser and Balibar, for example, or Hindess and Hirst.<sup>9</sup> Nor is it to suggest that this critique is universally accepted or has resolved all the problems facing the first two — on the contrary, the debate still rages and is no doubt far from resolved. Partly, of course, because these approaches share a common ground; and because they conflict both at an epistemological level (accusations of empiricism and idealism or rationalism fly thick

8. See for a good survey — and critique — of this tendency, most strongly represented today, of course, in some Soviet and East European history-writing: McLennan, *Marxism and the Methodologies of History*, esp. 3-14 on 'dialectical materialism'; and for a defence of a sophisticated 'base-superstructure' approach, see G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: a Defence* (Oxford 1979).

9. The classic structuralist critiques were elaborated in: L. Althusser, E. Balibar, *Reading Capital* (Eng. trans., London 1974); L. Althusser, *For Marx* (eng. trans., Harmondsworth 1969). For some critiques see N. Geras, 'Althusser's Marxism: an account and assessment', *New Left Review* 71 (1972) 71-86; S. Clarke, 'Althusserian Marxism', in: *One-Dimensional Marxism*, ed. S. Clarke et al. (London 1980); and, more polemically (and entertainingly) E. P. Thompson, *The Poverty of Theory* (London 1979). For the 'post-Althusserians', see the work of Hindess and Hirst, cited above (note 7) and their *Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production* (London 1977); P. Hirst, 'Althusser's Theory of Ideology', *Economy and Society* 5 (1976). None of these is absolutely representative of all the work in their 'area', but they will provide some idea of the fundamental problems and the debates. The most useful exposition of the realist position from the historian's standpoint is still McLennan, *Marxism and the Methodologies of History*. See also the summary of current debates in: G. McLennan, 'Philosophy and History: some issues in recent marxist theory', in: *Making Histories: Studies in History-Writing and Politics*, Richard Johnson, Gregor McLennan, Bill Schwarz, David Sutton (London/CCCS, Birmingham 1982) 133-152; and N. Mouzelis, 'On the Crisis of Marxist Theory', *British Journal of Sociology* 35 (1984) 112-121.

and fast) and a methodological level; and partly because the various emphases which have been developed over the years reflect to a greater or lesser degree, and quite consciously and deliberately so, the politics of those involved in the debates and the political necessities of the struggle for socialism, however that may have been and continues to be defined, and whatever its actual results.<sup>10</sup> Thus an emphasis on class struggle, for example, is supported by an attempt — most recently characterised in the work of Derek Sayer and others<sup>11</sup> — to challenge certain 'key' propositions of 'classical' Marxism: the distinction between base and superstructure, the primacy of the productive forces. This challenge argues that social relations are not restricted to a limited idea of 'economy', nor are they subordinate to the forces of production. Productive forces are themselves assimilated to social relations, with no causal effectivity outside the open-ended nature of social conflict and social change. It is to some extent part of the realist response to the Althusserian critique, yet an attempt to revalue classical Marxist approaches in the light of structuralist Marxist criticism. On the other hand, it has itself fallen foul of other representatives of realism.

Marxist approaches, therefore, are many and varied. The two fundamental perspectives which developed from the 1890s, and which have contributed to this cross-fertilisation and interweaving with other elements from within and without Marxism, remain at odds. These two perspectives — a philosophical/evolutionary approach, emphasising history as the process of human development and fulfillment (with a consequent potential for both determinist and teleological explanation); and an empirical/historical approach, stressing the primacy of the social relations of

10. It is worth emphasising this. Adherents of Marxist/materialist interpretations of history are generally politically 'socialists' of one type or another. But they are not unique. All historians work with 'theories', whether explicit or not, as we have seen; and their methods and assumptions in turn reflect the 'politics' of their own social and cultural position, like it or not. Even the most avowedly non-political scholar is inescapably political in her/his intellectual practice and in the effects of that practice. For some valuable discussion see R. Blackburn, ed., *Ideology in Social Science: readings in critical social theory* (London 1972), esp. G. Stedman-Jones, 'History: the Poverty of Empiricism', 95-115.

11. See D. Sayer, *Marx's Method* (Brighton 1979); D. Sayer, 'Science as Critique: Marx vs. Althusser', in: *Issues in Marxist Philosophy III* (cited note 4 above), for example.

production and the productive forces, as well as the embedding of historical change and ideas in the process of production and reproduction of material life — these continue to fuel the debate. But they have provided above all important alternatives, and continue to do so.

The Annales-influenced historical approach which was consolidated during the 1930s and 1940s has, like historical materialism, had a wide influence on the positivist and humanist traditions, as well as on Marxism. Its main principles have lain in an emphasis upon 'ecological' elements — such as demographic factors — and their effect on the shape and development of particular societies and within the wider historical context, both in time and in space. 'La longue durée' is perhaps the best-known recent watchword of the wider implications of this method. Statistical methods of analysis are combined with sets of rather general theories of human development determined by environmental constraints. From a more recent Marxist perspective, these ecologically-orientated histories can be taken to task for a certain determinism, whereby social and political relations tend to conform to their 'natural' conditions of existence in a rather one-sided way. This deterministic tendency has been overcome in some respects by the introduction of a series of different and sometimes conflicting rhythms (for example), governing the various determining elements, and hence permitting to the 'actors' (individuals and groups within the societies in question) a degree of conditioned freedom to respond.

The Annales tradition, however, has also placed emphasis on interdisciplinary synthesis and on the necessity of abstracting from its material evidence to a more generalising theoretical perspective. These elements together might be said to characterise Annales historiography, but it must be said also that historians who would certainly situate themselves within this tradition vary widely in their approach and their appreciation of these differing methodologies, both within generations and between generations: there are clearly many differences between the approaches and method of Marc Bloch and those of François Furet.<sup>12</sup>

12. For some general surveys of Annales historiography, see K. E. Born, 'Neue Wege der Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte in Frankreich. Die Historiker-Gruppe der "Annales"', *Saeculum* 15 (1964) 298-309; V. Rittner, 'Ein Versuch systematischer

In many ways, of course, the Annales historians, both past and present, have worked within a framework not too far removed from the realist materialism of some Marxists, although ultimately more dependent upon the Weberian than the Marxist traditions. Neither has Annales-type historiography escaped the influence of structuralism, particularly in anthropology. Historians such as Le Goff, and in the Byzantine field Patlagean, have attempted to incorporate some of the elements of a Lévi-Straussian structuralist paradigm into their work.<sup>13</sup> The influence of Annales historiography has been profound, and while many of its emphases and some of its methods have been absorbed into mainstream positivist history-writing and research programmes, it retains a distinctive core which continues both to influence historical research and to reflect a dialogue with other historiographical perspectives.

## V

A final critical approach remains that of structuralist and 'post-structuralist' theory. The two are clearly related, and yet very different in a number of ways. Structuralism as a set of methodological principles has had a long and distinguished history. Its best-known exponents have been anthropologists or linguists — Lévi-Strauss, for example, in many ways the founding figure of anthropological structuralism — as well as De

Aneignung von Geschichte: die "Schule der Annales"', in: I. Geiss, R. Tamchina, *Ansichten einer künftigen Geschichtswissenschaft I* (1974) 153-172; G. G. Iggers, *New Directions in European Historiography* (Middletown, Conn. 1975); *idem*, 'Die "Annales" und ihre Kritiker', *Historische Zeitschrift* 219 (1974) 578-608; and representatives of Annales historiography: M. Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (Manchester 1954); *Slavery and Serfdom in the Middle Ages: Selected Essays* (Berkeley 1975); L. Fèbvre, *A Geographical Introduction to History* (London 1932); P. Burke, ed., *A New Kind of History: from the Writings of Fèbvre* (London 1973); E. Le Roy Ladurie, *The Territory of the Historian* (Hassocks 1979); F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, 2 vols. (London 1975), esp. the introduction; F. Furet, 'Quantitative History', in: *Historical Studies Today*, eds. F. Gilbert, S. Graubard (New York 1971) 45-61. See on one particular element in the Annales tradition P. H. Hutton, 'The History of Mentalities: the New Map of Cultural History', *History and Theory* 20 (1981) 237-259.

13. See esp. J. Le Goff, P. Nora, eds., *Faire de l'histoire* (Paris 1974); E. Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, 4<sup>e</sup>-7<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris 1974), and the essays collected in: *Structure sociale, famille, chrétienté à Byzance* (London, Variorum 1981).



Saussure, Jakobson and many others. Its most important contribution in anthropological theory was the suggestion that variety and randomness might be generated by the operation of a limited number of principles, and that a deeper unity and systematicity lies beneath the appearances or phenomena which constitute the world as we perceive it. It has further argued that these phenomena are best analysed in terms of binary pairs of opposites, which establish meaning through their conjunction or opposition. Much of the basis for this approach comes from linguistics, of course, and the conceptual difference between language as an abstract system and language in use; as well as the distinction between the 'signified' and the 'signifier' (the two aspects of a linguistic code which determine meaning according to context and thereby permit communication) are both drawn from the work of Ferdinand de Saussure.<sup>14</sup> With regard to the notion that structuring principles lie beneath the phenomena of the perceived world, Lévi-Straussian structuralism has something in common with Marxist approaches and, in a different direction, with Freudian psychoanalysis, which argues likewise that sets of structural or causal mechanisms determine the multiplicity of surface phenomena. Lévi-Strauss himself concentrated chiefly on transformational mechanisms within a given socio-cultural structure; but many structuralist anthropologists have placed greater emphasis on the potential of a structuralist approach to explain the transition from one structure to another: for example, from caste-system to class, or from one set of kinship terms to another. Structuralist anthropology — and its historically-orientated variants — presents a variety of emphases within this general scheme, of course; it has likewise exercised a considerable influence on related disciplines.<sup>15</sup> And together with elements from the Marxist paradigm, and from Freudian and post-Freudian psychoanalysis,

14. See for a very brief exposé J. F. Haldon, 'On the Structuralist Approach to the Social History of Byzantium', *BS* 42 (1981) 203ff.

15. See M. Godelier, *Horizon, trajets marxistes en anthropologie* (Paris 1973); M. Augé, 'Towards a Rejection of the Meaning-Function Alternative', *Critique of Anthropology* 13/14 (1979) 61-75 (orig. in *L'Homme* 18 [1978] 139-154); *idem*, *The Anthropological Circle: Symbol, Function, History* (Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology 37, Cambridge 1982); M. Glucksmann, *Structural Analysis in Contemporary Social Thought: A Comparison of the Theories of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Louis Althusser* (London 1974); and A. Assiter, 'Althusser and Structuralism', *British Journal of Sociology* 35 (1984) 272-296.

it has been instrumental in generating what has become known, for want of a better term, as 'post-structuralism' or, in its literary contexts, 'de-constructionism'.

These terms are both vague, since they describe the general direction and tendency of a set of critiques, directed from a variety of perspectives, aimed at certain key elements in an equally wide variety of other approaches. Crucial to all of these post-structuralist developments is a critique of the position allowed to the 'Subject', that is, the human individual endowed traditionally with certain critical faculties and a certain freedom to respond to the environment in which s/he exists. But many adherents of this critique would not wish to classify themselves once and for all as post-structuralists — they remain marxists, or structuralists, or whatever. What, therefore, constitutes 'post-structuralism'?

It might be helpful to enumerate what seem to be the main elements which have combined to produce this tendency, namely: the structuralist Marxism elaborated by Louis Althusser; semiology and semiotic approaches to symbolic representation and language; Lacanian psycho-analysis; and the critiques of Althusser's work developed within Marxist thought during the 1970s. The reader is, no doubt, already at a loss!

Althusser's structuralist Marxism, developed during the later 1950s and 1960s, was intended essentially as a critique of what were seen as reductionist, economist marxist analyses in which the relationship of 'ideology' to social practice and to the economic level of a social structure remained simplistic and unproblematic. Althusser set out to correct this by purging marxism of its humanist, empiricist and historicist interpretations, where he defines humanism as the fallacy that human subjectivity is to be taken uncritically as the arbiter of all things; and empiricism as the notion that knowledge can be abstracted from a 'real' world and known through experience. Althusser argued that it was first of all necessary to reject the traditional base-superstructure model of social formations, an essentially empiricist formulation which represented a dualist opposition between mind and matter, in which ideas are seen merely as reflections of a material reality, as part of a 'superstructure'. Instead, he proposed a model of the social formation consisting in a series of material practices or levels, mutually interdependent, yet relatively autonomous,

which he identifies as the economic, political, ideological and theoretical, the whole 'overdetermined' (a term borrowed from Freud) conjuncturally by one particular practice. The economic is regarded as determining 'in the last instance', insofar as the relations of production determine the effectivity of the other levels within the totality of the social formation. Further, Althusser builds into this theory also a theory of knowledge: knowledge is not something inhering in the real world and abstracted through experience, but the result of a specific practice by which individuals are constituted within certain social relations, which they then themselves reproduce as 'agents' or 'bearers' of the social totality itself. The concept of ideology is crucial here, since it is through the various 'lived' ideologies — the particular forms of knowledge-production generated by the practices which constitute individuals referred to already — that individual human subjects receive their character and personality. Ideology thus 'interpellates' individuals, and is held to determine what individuals *think* they perceive about the world.

In Althusser's scheme, therefore, knowledge and ideology are no longer seen as bodies of thought which reflect experience, but rather practices themselves, just as material (that is, having actual effects) as other practices, and entailing specific effects referred to as the 'knowledge effect' and the 'ideological effect'.<sup>16</sup>

Central to Althusser's theory, and at the same time the starting-point for critiques of this approach, has been the work of the psycho-analyst Lacan. The latter developed a model of the constitution of the human subject — the individual — which was inspired by, but departed radically from, the work of Freud. Lacan invoked Freud's oedipal drama through which each child (supposedly) passes, seeing the various phases and the processes

16. See the work, and critiques, of Althusser in note 9 above. His approach to ideology (although he has since tried to modify it in accordance with some criticisms) is best expressed in: 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (notes towards an investigation)', in: *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London 1977) 121-173. For commentaries and discussion see G. McLennan, V. Molina, R. Peters, 'Althusser's Theory of Ideology', in: *On Ideology* (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, Working Papers 10, 1977) (London 1978) 77-105; P. Q. Hirst, 'Althusser's Theory of Ideology', *Economy and Society* 5 (1976). Althusser owes something to Gramsci, too, especially with regard to the idea of ideology as a mechanism of social cohesion. See S. Hall, R. Lumley, G. McLennan, 'Politics and Ideology: Gramsci', in: *On Ideology*, 45ff.

involved as determining the emergence of the child into society and language. The result is a subject which is in effect the sum of a combination of perceived images, and is consequently inconsistent and filled with actual and potential tensions and contradictions. There is no essential human subject, nor any essential human nature; merely an assemblage of ideological effects and images of 'self' provided by the social and cultural contexts through which the infant has developed. Lacan's account does not end here. It is both more sophisticated and more complex. But enough has been said to suggest its importance to an Althusserian definition of ideological practices as those which determine character and subjectivity.<sup>17</sup>

The third strand in post-structuralist thought is less esoteric, and refers back to the linguistic elements of structuralism referred to already, in particular the notion of the two aspects of a code of communication, the 'signifier' and the 'signified'; and the concomitant idea of binary pairs and opposites. In this approach, the position or inversion of signs — linguistic or more widely 'cultural' — can change meaning, which being determined by position and thus by context, is never ultimate or fixed. Interpretation (of a text, for example, as well as of a set of cultural phenomena) is thus a question first of identifying a context, determining which elements act as signifiers and which as signifieds, and how they function. Meaning is thus always 'open'. An author's intentions become effectively irrelevant, in terms of the actual function of a text, since fresh meanings are always appropriated according to the cultural context of the reader. And since the reader is her/himself constituted by the social contexts in which s/he lives, as well as by the context within which 'reading' occurs, the potential number of readings attributable to any text is theoretically infinite.<sup>18</sup> The term 'text' and the term 'reading', of course, are to be taken in the widest possible sense.

17. See L. Althusser, 'Freud and Lacan', *New Left Review* 55 (1969); D. Adlam et al., 'Psychology, Ideology and the Human Subject', *Ideology and Consciousness* 1 (1977) 5-56; and compare the reply of S. Hall, 'Some Problems with the Ideology/Subject Couplet', *Ideology and Consciousness* 3 (1978) 113-121. See also R. Wollheim, in: *New York Review of Books*, vol. 25 nos. 21-2 (Jan. 1979). For further elaboration, see R. Coward, 'Lacan and Signification: an Introduction', *Edinburgh '76 Magazine* 1 (1976) 6-20.

18. See, for example, R. Giraud, *Semiology* (London 1975); R. Barthes, *Elements*

These are the main strands present in post-structuralist or 'de-constructionist' thought. Together with the concepts of 'discourse' and 'discursive practice' refined out of the work of the structuralist linguists and, in particular, the earlier works of the historian and philosopher Michel Foucault, they have directed powerful critiques at traditional literary criticism on the one hand, and at both Marxist and non-Marxist historiography on the other.<sup>19</sup> Discourse refers essentially to a cultural language or 'signifying practice', that is to say, the totality of behavioural, linguistic and intellectual codes invoked by a particular culturally-defined role or set of roles — such as that of 'being married' or of 'being a historian', for example. It is more regularly employed — by Foucault himself, for example — in the wider sense of the 'discourse' of the social whole, that is, the totality of modes of communication and exchange within which social being is constituted and reproduced.

In its more developed formulation, this approach argues that no distinction between a 'realm of discourse' and a 'realm of real objects' to which the former corresponds can be made. Instead it is maintained that it is not possible to refer to anything outside of discourse as the measure of proof or validity of that discourse. The existence of a 'real' world is not denied; but since human subjectivity is constituted within discourse, the terms of which determine the ways in which anything can be known and, indeed, what can be known, then nothing can, in principle, be said about that world. Since this is the case, there can be no communication across discourses. Arguments from within one

of *Semiology* (London 1970); P. Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production* (London 1978); M. Foucault, 'What is an author?', in D. F. Bouchard, ed., *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (New York 1977).

19. Foucault's work has stimulated a great deal of discussion in the fields here reviewed. See in particular his *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London 1972); *The Order of Things: an Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London 1973); *The History of Sexuality I: an Introduction* (London 1978); 'Politics and the Study of Discourse', *Ideology and Consciousness* 3 (1978). For a useful analysis and description of his work, its influence, and the development of his ideas, see J. Weeks, 'Foucault for Historians', *History Workshop Journal* 14 (1982) 106-119 with literature; and also P. H. Hutton, *The History of Mentalities* (cited note 12 above) esp. 251ff; A. McGill, 'Foucault, Structuralism and the Ends of History', *Journal of Modern History* 51 (1979) 451-503.

discourse cannot disprove or invalidate those within another: two incompatible sets of variants can merely confront one another. The only way to deal with any theoretical discourse, for example, is to subject it to an absolutely rigorous internal critique in its own terms, to seek out inconsistencies and contradictions. 'Discursive practice' refers to the sum total of practices — intellectual and practical — which combine to maintain and reproduce a given discourse. 'Inter-discursive practices' are those which enable the human subject to transform its practice from the terms of one discourse to those of another.<sup>20</sup>

Now it will be apparent that this approach falls firmly within the conventionalist/rationalist framework referred to already; and that it is therefore subject to the same criticisms. It is, in effect, the reverse of empiricism, and meets with the same difficulties, difficulties which were already inherent in the structuralist linguistics of de Saussure, and which have been carried over into the post-structuralist field. The problem which both scientific conventionalism and structuralist linguistics share — that is, the problem faced by post-structuralist theory in general — remains that of understanding how elements which take their meaning from their position within a system are able to refer to real objects which have an independent existence outside that system.<sup>21</sup> What has tended to happen — partly because post-structuralist discourse

20. The clearest examples of this argument have been presented by B. Hindess and P. Q. Hirst, *Mode of Production and Social Formation* (cited note 7 above). See also Machery, *A Theory of Literary Production* (note 18 above); P. Q. Hirst, 'The Social Theory of Anthony Giddens: a New Syncretism?', *Theory, Culture and Society* 1 (1982); *idem*, *On Law and Ideology* (London 1979). These are written mostly within a sociological/historical context; but the central importance of language and literary construction is clear, and is expressed in the work of Machery and Barthes, for example, as well as in that of Pecheux: see for a useful summary R. Woods, 'Discourse Analysis: the Work of Michel Pecheux', *Ideology and Consciousness* 2 (1977) 57-79; also C. Haroche, P. Henry, M. Pecheux, 'La sémantique et la coupure saussurienne: langue, langage, discours', *Langages* 24 (1971) 93-106. For a summary of some of Derrida's work, and of Foucault's critique, see Jusdanis, in this volume, below.

21. Many post-structuralists would argue, of course, that there is no point in explaining such correspondences, since each discourse is complete in itself and can refer only inwards. This refusal, in turn, means the admission that discourses come into conflict on the basis of pure chance, and that those 'meanings' which do appear to have approximately equivalent values in different discourses do so by accident. Since this is the case, there is — following the argument through to its logical conclusion — no justification for the study of either the past or of literature, except perhaps that of personal gratification.

has concerned itself almost exclusively with *cultural* production (literature, film and so forth) rather than with social-structural *change* — is that language, because of its position as communications-system par excellence, is given pride of place in the construction of reality: reality becomes a function of language. At the same time, two crucial elements to any theory which sets out to understand social change, political conflict, shifts in ideology and so on, namely human agency and the structuring effects of social practice over time, are reduced to insignificance. It thus becomes impossible to explain the generation of change — a constant problem faced by structuralist analysis.<sup>22</sup> It must be said at this point, however, that the extreme 'de-constructionist' position — represented by the work of Derrida, for example — is not adopted by all who would see themselves as working within a post-structuralist tradition. There are many post-structuralist critics of de-constructionism who have taken up precisely the problems alluded to here, including Foucault himself. More recently, for example, post-structuralist theory has concentrated on the non-linguistic forces which determine the forms of discourse. In contrast to the emphasis placed upon the primacy of the symbolic order — of writing, art-form, communication through signification (signifier-signified) — thinkers such as Deleuze or Lyotard, as well as Foucault, have tried to develop a theory of the constitution of the subject through discourse centred around power and desire — the 'philosophy of desire' as it has become known. Challenging the earlier view that it is systems of communication, that is to say, of symbolic exchange, which constitute the social, this approach argues that symbolic structures serve in fact to mask power relations, which imply also relations of desire in the broadest sense. The arguments have been complex and the insights important, but one of the resultant difficulties has been the production of a concept of power immanent in the structures of social life, and the consequent hypostatiza-

22. For the post-structuralist perspective, D. Adlam, A. Salfeld, 'A Matter of Language: Review of R. Coward, J. Ellis, *Language and Materialism: Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject* (London 1977)', *Ideology and Consciousness* 3 (1978) 95-111. For critiques see, for example, Bob Scholte, 'From Discourse to Silence: the Structuralist Impasse', in: *Towards a Marxist Anthropology: Problems and Perspectives*, ed. S. Diamond (New York/The Hague 1979) 31-67; and D. E. Goodfriend, 'Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose: the Dilemma of the French Structuralist Marxists', *ibid.*, 91-124.

tion of power and desire. Post-structuralism has itself been unable to resolve this problem.<sup>22a</sup>

## VI

All these debates have given rise to a great deal of literature and much argument. The critique by post-structuralists in particular, of both empiricism and historical materialism in all their many forms, and within literary as well as more widely historical studies, has led to new developments in the debate on the constitution of knowledge and, in particular, on the role played in this by forms of narrative. Narrative is important because it is a form common to both literature as fiction, and history: both employ narrative structures which incorporate rhetorical elements intended to convince a readership of a particular argument. The ultimate aim of fiction is, of course, supposed to be different from that of history. But enough elements remain in common to provide a shared field of problems. The debate over narrative is not simply a debate over form, however. The question of the extent to which narrative structures, in addition to their communicative and persuasive functions, are also directly constitutive of historical knowledge itself, is clearly intimately bound up with the questions of epistemology already described. A debate about narrative is ipso facto a debate about the construction of knowledge. Perhaps the best-known proponent of this approach is Hayden White, who has argued that, since narrative form is in origin part of the literary imagination, history can be 'saved' from science (that is, from the over-rigid and deadening application of systems of proof current in the natural sciences) by emphasising its links with fiction.<sup>23</sup> This 'narrativist' position is in many ways closely linked to that of the post-structuralist critics in literary theory: it is thus maintained that the past cannot be thought of as a determinate reality, elements of which are in the

22a. For a good summary of recent debates in these areas, see P. Dews, 'Power and Subjectivity in Foucault', *New Left Review* 144 (Mar.-April 1984) 72-95; and also Gary Wickham, 'Power and Power Analysis: Beyond Foucault?', *Economy and Society* 12 (1983) 468-498.

23. Hayden White, *Metahistory: the Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore 1973); *Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore 1978); see further L. J. Goldstein, *Historical Knowing* (Austin, Texas/London 1976); P. Munz, *The Shapes of Time: a New Look at the Philosophy of History* (Connecticut 1977).

evidence waiting to be uncovered by the historian (a widely-held criticism of naive empiricism also, of course). Instead, it is conceived of as a meaningless chaos of traces, upon which meaning must be imposed through the application of narrative structure. But since there is a variety of structures or forms available, there is no single 'correct' interpretation through which the 'meaning' of the past can be apprehended, but rather a variety of conflicting meanings which the historian can choose to impose. Historians are thus free to interpret in accordance with their own views, and the only reason for selecting one particular view is its capacity to shed more light on the subject, according to the measure of the interpreter and the audience. The basis of such preference is located in the potential of particular *metahistorical* structures to make meaningful what is, in itself, meaningless. These metahistorical structures are common to both fictional and historical narratives equally.

*Metahistory*, as it has become known, owes something both to critiques of ontological empiricism and naive realism, as well as to post-structuralist critiques of the various forms of historical materialism. It has been criticised, however, partly on the ground of internal contradictions (the admission that facts or evidence exist assumes a conception of the past as an actuality, for example).<sup>24</sup> But the idea (and romance) of narrative has other, slightly differently inclined adherents including, for example, Lawrence Stone, who again has argued against what he sees as the top-heavy emphasis in modern historiography on 'structure' and other elements of 'science' — cliometrics, 'psychohistory', and so on — in favour of a return to the humanist core of western history-writing. Historians are advised to be both pluralist and eclectic in what they take from the social sciences, for example, and then to take only what happens to suit their immediate needs. Stone's argument, more emotionally expressed and less rigorous than that of the Metahistorians proper — albeit interesting and well-presented — has also been heavily criticised.<sup>25</sup> Suffice to say

24. Critiques of Metahistory can be found in *History and Theory* 19/4 (1980) (= Metahistory: six critiques. *History and Theory* Beiheft 19), for example. See in particular P. Pomper, 'Typologies and Cycles in Intellectual History', 30-38; and M. Mandelbaum, 'The Presuppositions of Metahistory', 39-54.

25. See L. Stone, 'The Revival of Narrative: Reflections on an Old New History', *Past and Present* 85 (Nov. 1979) 3-24; and *The Past and the Present* (Princeton, N.J.

that the debate continues, and has indeed produced in recent years a loosely-focussed tendency, referred to in the United States, where it has attracted most interest and stimulated the greatest discussion, as the 'New History' — although much less innovative than the 'New Archaeology' which has been so influential in archaeological/anthropological circles.<sup>26</sup>

## VII

It is not my intention to argue for or against any of these positions as such; I want to put them in their context and point to the richness and importance of the debates. Their relevance, at least in their general outlines, is not difficult to appreciate. We are, after all, trying to make sense of a different culture, certainly when dealing with the past, whether it is of our own culture or not. And as far as the present is concerned, it is surely the first rule of the social sciences to try to create a space between the object of study and the subjectivity of the researcher. This space must inevitably be a theoretical space, through which one creates the opportunity of identifying the reasons for approaching the problems involved in a particular fashion, what the consequences of that approach are likely to be, how the data are determined, and how they are employed, and so on. Most philosophers of history, for example (whatever their philosophical position with

1982) (collected essays). For some criticisms of Stone, see E. J. Hobsbawm, 'The Revival of Narrative: some comments', *Past and Present* 86 (Feb. 1980) 3-8; P. Abrams, 'History, Sociology, Historical Sociology', *Past and Present* 87 (May 1980) 3-16.

26. See Th.K. Rabb, R. I. Roberg, eds., *The New History: the 1980s and Beyond* (Princeton 1982), for example. The 'New History' is a mélange of rather diverse and eclectic points of view rather than a distinctive approach or set of approaches in its own right. 'New Archaeology', in contrast, represented since the early 1960s in particular by the work of Lewis Binford and Graham Clarke, presents a more cohesive picture. It inaugurated a move to introduce archaeologists to sociological and anthropological theory and to widen both the scope of the subject and the attitude of its practitioners. It is, of course, multifaceted, ranging from rigidly statistical approaches to settlement patterns, to more interpretative model-building; but there is a degree of unity and a certain clear line of development. See in particular K. Paddaya, 'Myths about the New Archaeology', *Saeculum* 34 (1983) 70-104, an admirable discussion and analysis of some of the difficulties presented by attempts to develop a theoretically-informed archaeology; also D. Bayard, '15 Jahre "New Archaeology": eine kritische Übersicht', *Saeculum* 29 (1978) 69-106.



regard to empiricism, idealism, materialism and other epistemological assumptions) would agree that historians do not simply stumble across the traces of the past (in the form of facts or evidence) nor indeed that the past is in any way available to simple 'discovery', or that it waits to be uncovered, already organised in a conceptually apprehensible fashion.<sup>27</sup> On the contrary, historians do constitute their facts, in that they attempt to reach knowledge of the past by placing it within a definite conceptual framework; they constitute 'facts' according to their explanatory requirements, such as a particular revolution, a war, a change in social or economic relations, and so on; they decide what role, if any, a particular artefact, or reference in a text, is to be allowed to play. Historians have therefore an obviously creative role in a process of cognition; and it is essential that they think not simply in terms of a historical narrative (how they handle technically a multiplicity of types of evidence). Consideration must necessarily be given also to the degree of agreement of a given narrative with the real *process* of history — the movement and transformation of human society through time. And that must imply consideration of the assumptions upon which the construction of the narrative is based — the theoretical premises — and what is assumed about the nature of causation and the relationship between human beings and the culture they construct but of which they are equally the products. The 'theories' which have been described are thus all relevant to these fundamental problems, for the question of how historians construct knowledge of the past is inextricably bound up with that of how the validity of these constructions can be measured against the process of historical change. And similar considerations apply to areas other than history, of course: the contextualising of a piece of literature, the validity of attempts at 'motivating' or attributing meaning

27. Except for, on the one hand, 'extreme' narrativists such as L. Goldstein (*Historical Knowing*, cited note 23 above) who would maintain that there is no difference between a historical fact and a *description* of that fact by the historian: since the historian constitutes facts while attempting to describe them, there is no need to study the 'truth' of a historical narrative. It is the narrative which constitutes and validates the facts, rather than vice versa. On the other hand, 'hard-line' methodological empiricists would contend that in fact historians do simply collect surviving 'bits' of the past, which is given (ontologically) unproblematically. See G. McLennan, *History and Theory: Contemporary Debates and Directions*, cited note 1 above.

to a literary text, the relevance of that text to others, these are all questions which depend for their resolution very much upon the theoretical premises with which the commentator begins the task in the first place.

Narrative exposition of data and conclusions is not the same as the research process itself, of course. But the underlying assumptions which guide the selection and employment of the data on the one hand, as well as the assumptions about how the evidence can then be used to build up an explanatory narrative and what relationships between evidence and interpretation exist, are the same for both aspects of historical work.<sup>28</sup> Research and selection of evidence is never 'blind', in the sense that there are always implicit aims underlying the sorts of questions asked and the sorts of relationships between different orders of evidence that are held to exist. What I would like to emphasise is the value of making these aims and assumptions explicit.

The value of knowing exactly how an argument has developed, that is to say, of knowing on what premises the logic of the argument has been constructed, is all too apparent in questions which raise the problem of the nature of ideology, for example, or of the relationship between belief and action, social practice and social change. The concept of 'ideology' — central in recent debates concerning the construction of human subjectivity and relevant to both the historical process and to literary production — is a good example. While it has been problematised with very fruitful results in discussions of the forms of cultural production in contemporary society, it occurs regularly and without the slightest attempt at definition or justification in discussions of Roman and Byzantine culture and politics. If it is used as a purely descriptive category, what types of ideas or action, coming from what sources, does it encompass? If it is used to describe a type of cognitive activity, how is it generated and made effective? What motifs and symbols does it involve, and why those in particular? Does it refer to all ideas or only some? And is it a type of dogma or propaganda, or something quite different? None of these questions are ever adequately answered. Indeed, most of them have never been asked. Despite the vast amount of detailed work carried

28. For the tension between narrative account and structural description, see P. Lassman, 'Social Structure, History, and Evolution', *Economy and Society* 13 (1984) 1-19.

out on the 'imperial idea', the 'emperor cult', the Byzantine thought-world', we seem still to be no nearer knowing how Byzantines thought what they did, nor how the relationship between the world as they perceived it, their own day-to-day practice, and the process of maintaining the complex structure of their social world, actually functioned. We have — essential to any sort of work on this problem — descriptions of phenomena; but not analyses of a crucial dynamic element of a whole culture. To a large extent, this state of affairs is an obvious result of the simple assumption that human nature (and therefore human responses and reactions) is an essential constant; and this without argued justification.<sup>29</sup> It is, of course, one of the keystones of empiricist/humanist epistemology; and the moment it is queried, then the whole validity and logic of an empiricist theoretical framework must be questioned too. Theoretical consideration is thus crucial, it seems to me, if any attempt to come to grips with the historical process and with the nature of cultural production is to be attempted. It may turn out to be the case that, after due consideration, no change in a given interpretational model and method is found to be necessary; but at least this can then be argued explicitly, demonstrated, subject to questioning and criticism, and so on; and alternative interpretative frameworks can be suggested which may open up entirely unsuspected doors.

### VIII

Not every historian, linguist or literary critic is, or needs to be, an expert in the philosophical debates which concern their own specialities, of course. But an awareness of, and where necessary reference to, such debates would provide some stimulus towards a discussion of more general problems common to the multifarious and often (apparently) quite unconnected areas of study with which we are all concerned. Some specialisms, because of their own development, and the nature of the subject matter itself, have tended — under the influence of the dominant

29. Byzantinists have yet to catch up with the discussion inaugurated within western historiography, for example: see M. Kerner, *Ideologie und Herrschaft im Mittelalter* (= Wege der Forschung Bd. 530. Darmstadt 1982) and in particular Kerner's valuable critical survey of the theoretical and empirical work carried out in the field since the 1930s: 1-58. Compare this with the Byzantinological equivalent, *Das byzantinische Kaiserbild* (= Wege der Forschung Bd. 341. Darmstadt 1975).

empiricist/positivist paradigm — to discourage any form of abstract or theoretical endeavour. We might name, by way of illustration, some of the sub-disciplines essential to Byzantine studies: codicology, palaeography, and the related areas of textual criticism and edition, highly technical specialisms closely connected with a classical philological tradition which has never really had much to do with 'history' in the sense defined at the beginning of this paper. Yet here lie, surely, some of the problems, at least for the Byzantine end of the spectrum. For 'Byzantine Studies' or 'Byzantinistik' as a specialised area of study has been guided almost exclusively by the methods and interests of the classical philological tradition developed from the Renaissance on, but refined to a high degree during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the 'golden age' of positivism. Comparative philology, the techniques of textual criticism, the principles of editing — the whole run of tools and resources without which Byzantine documentary evidence would be effectively unusable, if not inaccessible — these are the fields of interest which have, to a degree necessarily, dominated the study of the Byzantine past. And given the primacy of positivist influences in the historical and philological sciences during the period up to the second World War, this is hardly surprising. The positivist emphasis on 'scientificity' which moulded European and N. American historiographical thinking during the nineteenth century is still clearly represented in contemporary classical and Byzantine studies. An emphasis on the technical and methodological skills required for internal and external assessment of textual evidence, and the sub-sciences I have referred to which of necessity, originally as 'auxiliary' tools, accompanied this emphasis, meant that in many respects mastery of the auxiliary skills became (and to some extent remains) an end in itself. Indeed, one can hardly be regarded as 'competent' unless one possesses an intimate knowledge of one or more of these auxiliary methods. The result has been that a certain morality based on such virtues as patience, accuracy, technical rigour and so on — as opposed to 'sloppy' work and dilettantism — has developed. In themselves, we can hardly object to these values, and that they are essential to successful research is unquestionable. But the problem lies today in the fact that technique has been so closely associated with the scientificity of study, that technique is itself regarded as a sure

proof of 'good history': technique = scientific = productive/valuable research. This is, paradoxically, a real obstacle to theoretical abstraction, which can be dismissed as both unnecessary and misleading. It enables the specialist safely to ignore his/her own preconceptions on the assumption that the 'scientific' methods employed, since they are neutral and value-free, leads to a 'true' picture of the past. This touching belief in the neutrality of science is not, unfortunately, shared by philosophers of science and indeed many practical scientists themselves, who would — whatever the disagreements between schools of thought — all agree that 'science' is not and cannot be value-free, since it is the very way in which research-programmes are themselves constituted which determines the mode of interpretation of the results obtained under specific conditions. We are again led back to the question of the relationship between subjectivity and the appropriation of 'reality'.<sup>30</sup>

Historical interpretation, and analysis of the contexts within which interpretation occurs, has usually taken second place, behind the technical processing of data. When this has not been the case, then history has been viewed almost entirely as narrative — story-writing — in the literal sense; and so the modern literary reconstruction (or production) of a Byzantine past has taken place on a somewhat ad hoc basis. Within the field, there have been outstanding scholars of Byzantine history. But they have been almost exclusively classicists in their original training, often 'technicists' in the sense described above, and have only occasionally been interested in, or introduced into their work, the concerns of a wider historiographical/theoretical perspective. Given the historical and cultural influences and environment within which they worked and lived, this is hardly to be wondered at.

Byzantine studies as a special area has only gradually, and often reluctantly, appreciated its independence from its classical

philological antecedents; an independence which, it must be stressed, has tended to be institutional, rather than epistemological — the establishment of specific departments or institutes within the academic structures of the European university system.<sup>31</sup> Since an unavoidable element has been a familiarity with the various forms of the Greek language, scholars with a classical, rather than a specifically historical, training have constituted the great majority of Byzantinists. Again, there can surely be nothing inherently wrong with this. But Byzantine studies is now an established academic and intellectual presence in institutions of higher education, and it is perhaps time that those concerned with the subject, whatever their own background and training, began to look more closely at the assumptions they make when they actually get down to employing the techniques of their discipline in order to interpret, and how they actually produce knowledge from the source materials these techniques make available. Being a competent editor of texts and an exacting analyst of literary sources does not, in itself, produce historical knowledge; although in Byzantine studies, in contrast to any other fields with which I am familiar, this often seems to be an assumption underlying much research and publication. And Byzantine history, certainly when it comes to the analysis of substantive questions — the structure of a social and cultural formation, or the relationship between everyday experience and beliefs or ideologies — has remained, with a few exceptions, woefully unaware of the sorts of pitfalls and problems which other areas of historical research have had to tackle. The great majority of Byzantinists has worked within the normative epistemological framework of the empiricist/positivist and humanist tradition. Even the great debate on German historicism (*Historismus*), which dominated historiographical circles from the later nineteenth century and still retains its importance in W. Germany,<sup>32</sup> left Byzantine

30. This debate has flourished in the natural sciences. For three conflicting examples, which nevertheless demonstrate the point being made here, one need only refer to: K. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London 1972); also *Conjectures and Refutations* (London 1963); T. S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago 1962); and P. Feyerabend, *Against Method* (London 1975) and *Science in a Free Society* (London 1978). For further discussion see M. W. Wartofsky, *Models: Representation and Scientific Understanding* (Boston 1979); M. Hesse, *The Structure of Scientific Inference* (London 1974).

31. Reference to the introductory sections of Ostrogorsky's *History of the Byzantine State* or Moravcsik's *Einführung in die Byzantinistik* will provide a summary of this development.

32. Primarily and historically a result of the post-Second World War rejection of Marxism/materialism, which was, and to a large extent still is, equated unequivocally with historical writing in the Soviet Union and the GDR, and with 'dialectical materialism', together with the political systems which were regarded as inevitably bound up with these phenomena.

studies more or less untouched.<sup>33</sup>

None of this is to suggest that all Byzantinists have been ignorant of, or uninterested in, these debates — there is plenty of evidence to suggest the contrary. But, with the exception of some of the more sophisticated work carried out by Soviet and Eastern European Byzantinists, and that of a handful of Western European and North American scholars, mostly influenced by 'Annales' historiography, Byzantinists have, on the whole, failed to make them relevant, or to appreciate their relevance to their own concerns. The reasons for this are bound up intimately with the positivist origins of the subject as a 'university' discipline, which has meant that the invocation of abstractions and the attempt to develop generalising models for human society has regularly been dismissed as both irrelevant and dangerously deterministic: on the one hand, because human actions are unique, diverse and unrepeatable; on the other, because general models constrain the possibilities of the narrative account which historians build up with their facts. While there are and have been distinguished empiricist philosophers of history and the social sciences, who have been interested in generating and applying abstract models and who have examined the principles on the basis of which historical knowledge is possible, Byzantine studies

33. Historismus was (and is) a complex debate, marked on the one hand by attempts to define methods of analysing the past in its own terms without falling into absolute relativism; and on the other hand, by attempts to develop general laws of historical causation within which the uniqueness and specificity of the evidence could be comprehended without depriving it of its particular contextual meaning. Representatives of Historismus, such as Dilthey, viewed the movement as a turning point in the understanding of the past; it was, as well as a theory of historical knowledge, and methodology of the social-historical sciences, a new step towards the comprehension of reality. This confidence was shaken during the period of re-assessment following the first World War, but the legacy of historicism continues to dominate modern German historiography, challenged only by elements of Annales-type history and by Western Marxist historiography (dismissed by many West German historians, as we have seen, as irredeemably compromised by the existence of the Soviet/East European political bloc and their systems). The latter influences — particularly of the Annales and of structuralism — can be most obviously detected in attempts to develop a German *histoire non-événementielle* or *Begriffsgeschichte*. For some general comments, see Rossi, 'The Ideological Valences of Twentieth-Century Historicism', *History and Theory*, Beiheft 14 (1975) 16-29; J. Passmore, 'The Poverty of Historicism Revisited', *ibid.* 30-47; McLennan, *Marxism and the Methodologies of History*, 67ff; I. Veit-rause, 'A Note on Begriffsgeschichte', *History and Theory* 20 (1981) 61-67; R. Tribner, 'Is There a Social History of the Reformation?', *Social History* 4 (Jan. 1977) 33-505. Note also the literature cited in note 6 above.

remains for the most part oblivious to their efforts, and indeed indifferent to them — perhaps on the basis of the old empiricist adage that too much theory may addle the brain. This is, alas, hardly borne out by the results of Byzantinological research, which remains for the most part inaccessible to other ancient and medieval researchers. Inaccessible not in the sense that Byzantinists deliberately close off their work from interested outsiders; but rather in the sense that they have tended to write very much for themselves. In terms of the need to deal at a very specialised level with their own particular problems, of course, this is common to any subject-area. But the failure to think in broader terms and to discuss problems which are in fact shared with other disciplines, too, has given Byzantine studies the reputation of being both esoteric and entirely bound up with its own concerns.<sup>33a</sup> This may be unjustified, but the activities of Byzantinists do seem to encourage such notions, and they can be refuted only if Byzantinists themselves demonstrate in their assumptions and their approach — and not just through the occasional written or verbal affirmation — that they do see their subject as only one part of a much wider perspective.

## IX

The same factors do not always apply in the case of literary studies and the history of modern Greece, of course, although it is clear that a range of related problems exists. Literary studies have, like historical studies, been open to similar influences and developments over the last twenty or thirty years. The study of

33a. This is particularly so in the English-language tradition, although the comment certainly applies to Byzantine studies in general. On the other hand, some areas within the field, partly because of their varied roots and more broadly-defined objectives, are less open to criticism from this point of view — the study of Byzantine law, of demography and of geography are cases in point. And more recently, it must be said, historians of the Byzantine world have shifted the focus of their attention to emphasise aspects of the Byzantine past which had been neglected, or to introduce interpretational innovations. See the comments of A. P. Kazhdan, *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge/Paris 1984) (trans. S. Franklin), particularly the opening survey of historians' approaches to the Byzantine past, 1-22. See also A. P. Kazhdan, G. Constable, *People and Power in Byzantium. An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies* (Washington D.C. 1982). But while Byzantine history-writing has been influenced from outside, this has had little effect upon the implicit assumptions of the historians in question. It represents in many ways simply a fashionable re-working of the material within the traditional empiricist paradigm.

modern Greek literature has been influenced to the same degree as that of other literatures. But other features are also apparent which I think have much to do with the current trajectory of Byzantine and modern Greek studies, both literary and historical, in the widest sense. On the one hand, the dominance of the traditional empiricist and humanist approach is clear, within which include the canons of Leavisite criticism in the literary sphere. On the other hand, there exists a strong and usually unquestioned assumption of continuity in cultural tradition and essence from medieval and indeed pre-medieval times to the present day. This is taken as unproblematically relevant to the interpretative activities of both writers and critics. Together with a vague notion of separateness and difference from neighbouring cultures, reinforced by the historical experience of the Tourkokratia, the role of the Orthodox Church, and the history of the Greek state since the mid-nineteenth century, these two features serve to mould in many ways the assumptions which dominate the academic consensus about the Greek world and Greek culture. This is not to deny that 'continuity' exists — it is undeniably obvious in all manner of ways — nor to suggest that differences between Greek culture and neighbouring cultures and traditions are imaginary.<sup>34</sup> But there is a hidden tendency to assume, because of the way these various assumptions operate together, that Greek literature is a special case, and that Greek cultural tradition likewise constitutes something essentially different in the field of human experience. This consensus has been challenged, but it still retains a good deal of its strength.<sup>35</sup> Much of this essentialism

34. Although what exactly constitutes 'continuity' or 'discontinuity' has fuelled debate since the beginnings of the phil-hellenic movement. For some recent highly critical comments, see P. Speck, 'Waren die Byzantiner mittelalterliche Altgriechen, oder glaubten sie es nur?', *Rechtshistorisches Journal* 2 (1983) 5-11; and note the discussion of Sp. Vryonis, 'Recent Scholarship on Continuity and Discontinuity of Culture: Classical Greeks, Byzantines, Modern Greeks', in: *Byzantina kai metabyzantina 1: The 'Past' in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. Sp. Vryonis, (Malibu 1978) 237-256. Vryonis distinguishes a variety of different approaches to some of these questions, grouping them loosely into five 'schools': the classicist, modernist, nationalist, racist and legalist, according to their perspective with regard to the role of ethnicity, language and culture, and so on. A useful critique of this analysis has been made by D. Stein in a paper presented to the Byzantine seminar at the University of Hamburg. The paper unfortunately remains unpublished, but I would like to thank the author for making his notes available to me.

35. See the articles of Beaton and Jurdanis in this volume.

is bound up with often highly sensitive questions of an obviously cultural-political nature: nationalism and national identity; 'official' tradition and the role of the 'Great Idea' in popular Greek culture; language and the politics of linguistic change; current and past difficulties over land and resources in the Balkans and the Aegean, and so on. Such problems can hardly be side-stepped. Some of them have been approached in the pages of this journal already. It is important to recognise the role they play, however subtly, in determining our consciousness of the nature of a culture and its development. Equally clearly, this set of problems has unavoidably influenced the attitudes to the Greek world in general of students of the Byzantine world; and it applies, albeit with different results and different nuances, to Greek scholars themselves when confronting their own past and present. Indeed, the differential relationship of these 'structural' effects upon Greek and non-Greek students of the Byzantine and modern Greek world within and without Greece, the interaction between diaspora Hellenism and other cultures, is itself an area crying out for further investigation.<sup>36</sup>

## X

Byzantine and modern Greek studies as an *area of study*, therefore, is beset by a number of difficulties and contradictions. I stress the 'area of study' to emphasise the common elements and at the same time to remind that my description is, of necessity, a generalising one. There are many who are aware of the sorts of problems I have pointed to, even though the emphases and direction of research and publication have changed only very slowly over the last fifty years or more. And the problems are to a considerable degree exacerbated by the compartmentalisation of the human sciences in the western university system. It should be pointed out in passing, of course, that it is largely this very compartmentalisation to which Byzantine and modern Greek studies owe their origins and their current — relatively speaking — flourishing academic state. But that does not alter the fact that they have been very reluctant indeed to invoke on a permanent and effective basis theoretical discussion. As mentioned already,

36. See the article of Vryonis, cited note 35 above.

modern Greek literature has been influenced to the same degree as that of other literatures. But other features are also apparent which I think have much to do with the current trajectory of Byzantine and modern Greek studies, both literary and historical, in the widest sense. On the one hand, the dominance of the traditional empiricist and humanist approach is clear, within which I include the canons of Leavisite criticism in the literary sphere. On the other hand, there exists a strong and usually unquestioned assumption of continuity in cultural tradition and essence from medieval and indeed pre-medieval times to the present day. This is taken as unproblematically relevant to the interpretative activities of both writers and critics. Together with a vague notion of separateness and difference from neighbouring cultures, reinforced by the historical experience of the Tourkokratia, the role of the Orthodox Church, and the history of the Greek state since the mid-nineteenth century, these two features serve to mould in many ways the assumptions which dominate the academic consensus about the Greek world and Greek culture. This is not to deny that 'continuity' exists — it is undeniably obvious in all manner of ways — nor to suggest that differences between Greek culture and neighbouring cultures and traditions are imaginary.<sup>34</sup> But there is a hidden tendency to assume, because of the way these various assumptions operate together, that Greek literature is a special case, and that Greek cultural tradition likewise constitutes something essentially different in the field of human experience. This consensus has been challenged, but it still retains a good deal of its strength.<sup>35</sup> Much of this essentialism

34. Although what exactly constitutes 'continuity' or 'discontinuity' has fuelled debate since the beginnings of the phil-hellenic movement. For some recent highly critical comments, see P. Speck, 'Waren die Byzantiner mittelalterliche Altgriechen, oder glaubten sie es nur?', *Rechtshistorisches Journal* 2 (1983) 5-11; and note the discussion of Sp. Vryonis, 'Recent Scholarship on Continuity and Discontinuity of Culture: Classical Greeks, Byzantines, Modern Greeks', in: *Byzantina kai Metabyzantina 1: The 'Past' in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. Sp. Vryonis, jr. (Malibu 1978) 237-256. Vryonis distinguishes a variety of different approaches to some of these questions, grouping them loosely into five 'schools': the classicist, periodist, nationalist, racist and legalist, according to their perspective with regard to the role of ethnicity, language and culture, and so on. A useful critique of this analysis has been made by D. Stein in a paper presented to the Byzantine seminar at the University of Hamburg. The paper unfortunately remains unpublished, but I would like to thank the author for making his notes available to me.

35. See the articles of Beaton and Jusdanis in this volume.

is bound up with often highly sensitive questions of an obviously cultural-political nature: nationalism and national identity; 'official' tradition and the role of the 'Great Idea' in popular Greek culture; language and the politics of linguistic change; current and past difficulties over land and resources in the Balkans and the Aegean, and so on. Such problems can hardly be side-stepped. Some of them have been approached in the pages of this journal already. It is important to recognise the role they play, however subtly, in determining our consciousness of the nature of a culture and its development. Equally clearly, this set of problems has unavoidably influenced the attitudes to the Greek world in general of students of the Byzantine world; and it applies, albeit with different results and different nuances, to Greek scholars themselves when confronting their own past and present. Indeed, the differential relationship of these 'structural' effects upon Greek and non-Greek students of the Byzantine and modern Greek world within and without Greece, the interaction between diaspora Hellenism and other cultures, is itself an area crying out for further investigation.<sup>36</sup>

## X

Byzantine and modern Greek studies as an *area of study*, therefore, is beset by a number of difficulties and contradictions. I stress the 'area of study' to emphasise the common elements and at the same time to remind that my description is, of necessity, a generalising one. There are many who are aware of the sorts of problems I have pointed to, even though the emphases and direction of research and publication have changed only very slowly over the last fifty years or more. And the problems are to a considerable degree exacerbated by the compartmentalisation of the human sciences in the western university system. It should be pointed out in passing, of course, that it is largely this very compartmentalisation to which Byzantine and modern Greek studies owe their origins and their current — relatively speaking — flourishing academic state. But that does not alter the fact that they have been very reluctant indeed to invoke on a permanent and effective basis theoretical discussion. As mentioned already,

36. See the article of Vryonis, cited note 35 above.



the nature of the source materials, the traditions which have moulded the discipline and its sub-sciences, have all combined to produce this result. The sort of debate that has gone on in western medieval or literary studies and which might actually involve a questioning of both our intellectual activities and indeed our academic *raison d'être*, has hardly begun in Byzantine and modern Greek studies.

It may be that this last point bears most on the current situation, and explains to an extent the polarisation of theoretically- and empirically-orientated work. Some elements of post-structuralist and 'de-constructionist' criticism have recently been brought to bear on crucial areas of the humanist literary-critical tradition, for example: the notion of the author; the problem of reconstruction or retrieval of meanings; the question of intentionality. Not surprisingly, the reaction has been sharp, even angry. But one problem is immediately apparent. The critics, and *their* critics, are using different vocabularies and starting from different assumptions. Mutual respect, therefore, an important part of any constructive debate, even if present, is difficult to detect. Both sides can afford to dismiss the criticisms of their opponents as having either 'missed the point' or as being filled with 'incomprehensible jargon'. At least, perhaps, a certain unquestioning consensus has been broken, which can, if other subject areas are anything to judge by, do much for the field in general. But for this to happen it will require a willingness on the part of those who see themselves as the injured party (and there are many 'neutrals' between these two rather loosely drawn-up groups!) to look more carefully at the premises upon which they have been working, and to be prepared to justify their work outside the realms of their own discourse. Equally, of course, this is not to suggest that one party is correct and the other incorrect. There are powerful intellectual criticisms to be directed at many post-structuralist arguments; while the academic and intellectual politics of many on both sides is often unworthy of much respect. On the one hand, critics of the consensus revel in demonstrating the supposedly subjective and inconsistent logic of their victims' work, sometimes in terms of intellectual arrogance which it is difficult to justify at any level of debate, even as a literary device. Regular misuse of terms like empiricism (which some appear to believe is synonymous with empirical!) and

sometimes an apparent ignorance of both the origins of their own position and the wider context in which it is developed, hardly encourage confidence in the arguments expressed. An unfortunate tendency to transfer en bloc the terms of French theoretical debate to a different context, regardless of the cultural-linguistic environment and the lack of any culturally-mediating discourse, has not helped. An even more unfortunate inability or unwillingness on the part of some of the participants on this side of the debate to appreciate the import of their critique for their own practice further undermines their position.

On the other hand, self-proclaimed representatives of liberal university and scholarly traditions stand up proudly for 'scholarship', a much-abused term by no means always identifiable with intellectual value. 'Scholarship', they would claim, is absent where 'jargon' is present. 'Jargon' appears to refer to any technical vocabulary or argumentation which they have either failed to understand or cannot be bothered to try to understand.<sup>37</sup> Some familiarity with the related disciplines from which this so-called jargon is drawn would at least permit an informed debate about the appropriateness of such terms, and this is surely an obligation on all those who wish to enter the debate at all.

In Byzantine and modern Greek studies, of course, the whole thing is complicated by the intrusion of residual romantic Hellenism on the one hand, and Greek cultural politics on the other. At a rather 'deeper' level there exists the competitiveness of a male-dominated scholarly world in which masculine pride and academic careerism, fuelled by an intensely individualistic career structure and the uncritically-accepted goals of 'success', is often more of a stimulus to mutual disagreement than to any attempt to reach an understanding.

The 'personal politics' of individual academics is fundamental, and the emotionally-charged nature of much of the debate makes this very clear indeed. It may be that little can be done

37. Interestingly, those most ready to dismiss the unfamiliar as 'jargon' regularly employ their own 'technical' language in social contexts, regardless of their audience, on the assumption that their values and knowledge are universally accessible and contextually meaningful. Likewise, the powerful subjective, humanist element in their hostility to formalised technical language in the human sciences is illustrated by their ready acceptance of such vocabulary in the natural sciences, which are somehow conceived of as more 'objective'.

to change this institutionalised culture. But I have tried in this article to suggest reasons behind the problems and disagreements, and to open up what must often appear to be a closed debate conducted in an entirely alien technical language. The price of clarification in an article of this length is inevitably simplification. I have not intended by any means to suggest that all who consider themselves Byzantinists or neo-Hellenists should now feel obliged to familiarise themselves with every debate and every philosophical position which might possibly be relevant to their work; merely that the debates are important; that they really cannot be dismissed out-of-hand; that technical terms have a functional history behind them, they serve a purpose, and that without them precision and accuracy are sacrificed for long-winded paraphrase; and, perhaps most importantly, that 'theory' is implicit in every analysis, whatever 'common sense' dictates.

What emerges from all this debate and disagreement is, in fact, remarkably aptly described by what the philosopher of science T.S. Kuhn has termed a 'paradigm shift' — the move from an established paradigm (in which a single, more or less homogeneous, framework determines both the methods and the direction of research, and in which theoretical reflection is minimal, since the established paradigm, in becoming so, has already justified itself) to a new paradigm, which itself grows out of an accumulation of criticisms of the older framework. This period — during which anomalies in the established paradigm are highlighted, and in which a variety of sometimes rival perspectives share the field with the established tradition — Kuhn designates 'pre-paradigm'. While there are criticisms to be made of Kuhn's model of scientific change, it is nevertheless illustrative of the sorts of shifts which have occurred in historiography and literary critical studies over recent years, and serves as a functionally useful way of distancing ourselves for a moment from the detail of our everyday experience. And it seems to me that we are in just this sort of 'pre-paradigm' phase in Byzantine and modern Greek studies today.<sup>38</sup>

*University of Birmingham*  
*Centre for Byzantine Studies and Modern Greek*

38. See Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (cited note 3 above), esp. 19-21, 43-51, and 5-18; note also 87-93, on the appearance of a 'generation gap' within a scientific community when such paradigm crises occur.

## Ethnic identity and patriotic idealism in the writings of General Makriyannis

DAVID HOLTON

Two recent publishing events have once more focussed the attention of the Greek public on the writings and personality of General Makriyannis (ca. 1797-1864).<sup>1</sup> The first is the publication of a three-volume computerised concordance to his *Memoirs*,<sup>2</sup> which paves the way for more systematic linguistic and stylistic study of this particular work, and at the same time demonstrates — apparently for the first time as far as modern Greek philological studies are concerned, at least in Greece itself<sup>3</sup> — the usefulness of the computer in handling lengthy literary texts.

The other noteworthy event was the appearance of a critical edition of a second extensive prose work by Makriyannis, the so-

1. A shortened and modified version of this article was read in Greek at the Fifth Conference of the Linguistics Department of the University of Thessaloniki, 2-4 May 1984. Grateful thanks are due to Margaret Alexiou, Richard Clogg and Tassos Christidis for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

2. [N.I. Kyriazidis and I.N. Kazazis], Το Λεξιλόγιο του Μακρυγιάννη ή πώς μιλούσαν οι Έλληνες προτού βιαστεί η γλώσσα μας από την καθαρεύουσα, τόμοι Α-Γ; Ιδέα — γενική επιμέλεια Ν.Ι. Κυριαζίδης, Γλωσσική επεξεργασία: Ι.Ν. Καζάζης, Προγράμματα κομπιούτερ: J. Bréhier (Athens 1983). For a brief account in English of the project, see J. Kazazis, 'Constructing a computer-assisted complete index to Makriyannis' Memoirs', *Μαντατοφόρος* 22 (1983) 27-33.

3. Some dramatic works of the Cretan Renaissance have been processed by computer; they include *The Sacrifice of Abraham* (see Dia Philippides, 'Computers and Modern Greek', *Μαντατοφόρος* 17 (1981) 5-13) and the plays of Chortatsis (although the latter project, undertaken by Rosemary Bancroft-Marcus, was abandoned because of technical difficulties). On the other hand, word-lists of several Modern Greek poets have been produced in recent years without the aid of a computer.

called *Οράματα και Θάματα (Visions and Wonders)*.<sup>4</sup> The existence of this work was first reported in print by George Theotokas in 1945,<sup>5</sup> shortly after the death of Yannis Vlachoyannis, who had acquired the sole manuscript of it in 1936.<sup>6</sup> It was Vlachoyannis, of course, who had transcribed and edited Makriyannis's *Memoirs* from a manuscript of which no trace can now be found.<sup>7</sup> One of the many important aspects of the newly published work is the fact that it exists in an autograph manuscript. Close study of this manuscript will undoubtedly lead to many corrections to the text of the *Memoirs* and reveal much new information about the author's language and style.

But there is another reason for viewing the two works in conjunction with one another. Although Makriyannis refers in the *Visions* to the *Memoirs* as "my other history" (τ' άλλο μου το ιστορικό),<sup>8</sup> he informs the reader that at least the first section of the *Visions* originally formed part of the *Memoirs*, but was removed from there (and, presumably, copied into the manuscript of the new work) out of fear that the authorities would search his house and discover these supposedly incriminating pages.<sup>9</sup> The precise reasons for his anxieties about this particular document are still a matter of conjecture, and much detective work

4. Στρατηγού Μακρυγιάννη, *Οράματα και Θάματα*. Εισαγωγή, κείμενο, σημειώσεις "Αγγέλου Ν. Παπακώστα. Πρόλογος Λίνου Πολίτη (Athens 1983) (hereafter, Makriyannis, *Visions*). A separate volume offers a facsimile of the autograph manuscript of the work: *Οράματα και Θάματα*. Τό χειρόγραφο του Μακρυγιάννη (Athens 1983). There is also a small booklet published by the Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece (which financed the edition), with brief but useful contributions by V. Sfyroeras, G.P. Savvidis and N. Svoronos: S.P. Panagopoulos and others, *Κείμενα για τα "Οράματα και Θάματα" του Μακρυγιάννη* (Athens 1984).

5. In an article in the newspaper *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 16 September 1945. See L. Politis, foreword to Makriyannis, *Visions*, 7, and G.K. Katsimbalis, Βιβλιογραφία Ι. Μακρυγιάννη και ΙΙ. Ζωγράφου (Athens 1957), item 72. Theotokas's article is reprinted in his *Πνευματική Πορεία* (Athens n.d.) 163-6.

6. For the relevant facts and references see L. Politis in Makriyannis, *Visions*, 7 ff.

7. First edition: *Ἀρχαία Νεωτέρας Ἑλληνικῆς Ἱστορίας*. Ἐκδίδονται ἐπιμελείᾳ Ἰωάννου Βλαχογιάννη. Β'. Ἀρχεῖον τοῦ Στρατηγού Ἰωάννου Μακρυγιάννη. Τόμος Δεύτερος (Περιέχων τὰ Ἀπομνημονεύματα) (Athens 1907). On the fate of the manuscript see A.N. Papakostas in Makriyannis, *Visions*, 27 ff.

8. *Visions* 41.15-16 and elsewhere. All references to the text of this work are by page and line number of the Papakostas edition, but Greek quotations are transferred into the monotonic system of orthography.

9. *Visions* 41.24-42.2 Cf. G.P. Savvidis, Γραμματολογική παρουσίαση του "Οράματα και Θάματα", in S.P. Panagopoulos and others, *Κείμενα*, 21-2.

will have to be done to clarify the relationship between the two texts. In the absence of the manuscript of the *Memoirs* the problem may indeed remain insoluble. However, it is clear that the *Visions* cannot be viewed as a totally separate work begun only after the completion of the *Memoirs*, as was once believed.

These two texts are the primary sources for an attempt, which will be made here, to elucidate the concepts of ethnic identity and patriotism as Makriyannis understood them and expressed them in his writings. The bulk of evidence will be drawn from the *Memoirs*, for perhaps obvious reasons. However, the same ideas about patriotism also emerge clearly in the *Visions*, to an extent that might not have been foreseen before the publication of the latter text. Supporting or qualifying evidence from the *Visions* will therefore be adduced at appropriate points in the analysis which follows.

Makriyannis's fervent patriotism reappears constantly throughout the text of the *Memoirs*. Indeed one might say that patriotism is the single idea which cements the whole work together. It is expressed differently in different contexts and involves a range of obligations; for example, it motivates the need for truth and sincerity in the author, it is closely linked with the Orthodox Christian faith, it is a necessary component of honour and self-respect and it is characterised by bravery in battle and a lack of self-interest in political dealings.<sup>10</sup>

To affirm that patriotism is a major, perhaps the major, theme of the *Memoirs* is not a novel nor a very illuminating statement. After all the subject matter is first and foremost the War of Independence and the faltering steps of the new national state, a period in which warring internal factions and interfering external agencies sought to regularise and direct the polity of a new political entity — the Kingdom of Greece. Those who have written about Makriyannis have often found expressive and rhetorical ways of drawing attention to the nationalistic and patriotic beliefs that are incorporated in the *Memoirs*: Vlachoyannis spoke of Makriyannis writing as if at the dictation of some mysterious voice — ἡ φωνή τοῦ ἔθνους αὐτοῦ.<sup>11</sup> For Theotokas he writes as a

10. Cf. P.D. Mastrodimitris, "Ο χαρακτήρας τῶν "Απομνημονευμάτων" τοῦ Μακρυγιάννη", *Παρνασσός* 18.2 (1976) 225-40, especially pp. 232, 236-7.

11. Y. Vlachoyannis, *Στρατηγού Μακρυγιάννη Ἀπομνημονεύματα*. Κείμενον

national representative.<sup>12</sup> Kyriakopoulos calls him a σύμβολο τοῦ γένους,<sup>13</sup> echoing Dimaras's characterisation of Makriyannis as "a symbol of modern Hellenism, with the defects and virtues that typify the race . . ."<sup>14</sup> Similarly for Michailidis he possesses "the heritage of the national soul", in this one work are collected "the ideals and feelings of the whole nation", and the fact that the work gives "the whole internal history, the whole complex individuality (ὀντότητα), the feeling and the thought of the Greek is Makriyannis's great contribution".<sup>15</sup> According to Philip Sherrard, Makriyannis is "the product of a racial consciousness which has been enshrined in a continuous tradition of myth, legend and poetry".<sup>16</sup> Seferis, in his influential wartime essay, had used very similar phrases of the *Memoirs*: "the culture, the education, which Makriyannis shows is not fragmentary, is not, as it were, a piece of private property. It is the common lot, the spiritual wealth of a race, handed on through the ages from millennium to millennium, from generation to generation, from the sensitive to the sensitive; persecuted and always alive, ignored and always present — the common lot of Greek popular tradition. It is the essence, precisely, of this civilization, this differentiated energy that formed the men and the nation that in 1821 decided to live in freedom or to die." Makriyannis is "a surefooted messenger of the long and unbroken tradition of the people". And again: "the content of Makriyannis's writing

εἰσαγωγή σημειώσεις Γιάννη Βλαχογιάννη, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Athens 1947), A 84 (hereafter, Vlachoyannis, *Memoirs*). There is an English translation of the greater part of Makriyannis's text: Makriyannis, *The Memoirs of General Makriyannis 1797-1864*. Edited and translated by H.A. Lidderdale. Foreword by C.M. Woodhouse (London 1966).

12. "Ένας ἔθνικός ἀντιπρόσωπος, ένας δυνατός Φορέας ζωντανοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ". G. Theotokas, "Ὁ Στρατηγὸς Μακρυγιάννης", Νέα Ἑστία 30 (1941) 723. The article is reprinted in his Πνευματικὴ Πορεία, 141-63 (see p. 162 for the reference in question).

13. K.A. Kyriakopoulos, Μελετήματα (Athens 1976), Ch. III, 53-70, entitled Μακρυγιάννης, "Σύμβολο τοῦ Γένους".

14. K.Th. Dimaras, Ἱστορία τῆς Νεοελληνικῆς Λογοτεχνίας, 4th ed. (Athens 1968) 259.

15. G. Michailidis, "Ὁ Μακρυγιάννης καὶ ὁ Νεοελληνικὸς Μῦθος", Νέα Ἑστία 47 (1959) 442-3.

16. P. Sherrard, *The Wound of Greece. Studies in Neo-Hellenism* (London/Athens 1978) 55. A Greek version of the same essay is published in P. Sherrard, Δοκίμια γιὰ τὸν Νέο Ἑλληνισμό (Athens 1971) 141-65.

is the unending and tragic struggle of a man who, deeply rooted in the instincts of his race, is striving for freedom, justice and human dignity". And he concludes that Makriyannis's work is "the conscience of a whole nation — a testament of supreme value".<sup>17</sup>

But few critics have stopped to wonder how Makriyannis's ideology was shaped or even to remark that it is rather surprising that an uneducated person like him should exhibit so developed a sense of national consciousness before a national state had been created. There has been a tacit assumption that Makriyannis was entirely typical of his contemporaries in his awareness of a Greek national identity which was somehow imbibed with his mother's milk and that his perception was easily transferred into patriotic fervour when the moment for action arrived. Those who make this assumption are imposing attitudes derived from subsequent events on the situation before 1821. (This is rather like the later-nineteenth century view of the klefts as a national proto-resistance force engaged in fighting the national enemy, the Turks, defending their compatriots against foreign occupation and preserving the sacred torch of liberty through the years of slavery and oppression. Such an interpretation of the klefts is at odds with the historical evidence and the kleftic songs.) Michailidis remarks that Makriyannis inherited the ideas of the French Revolution, but mostly in an involuntary and unconscious way, that is not by precept.<sup>18</sup> This is a reasonable assumption, but it does not take us much further in analysing Makriyannis's ideology or explaining how a desire for freedom crystallised into the demand for a national state, or indeed a constitutional monarchy. The French and the Greek situations were obviously very different.

One of the few attempts to analyse the ideology of Makriyannis against his socio-historical background is by Spyros Asdrachas.<sup>19</sup> He sees Makriyannis as representing on the one hand the progress of the *Romios* from an agricultural, peasant

17. G. Seferis, Δοκίμεις, 4th ed. (Athens 1981) I 228-63. The quoted translations are from G. Seferis, *On the Greek Style*. Translated by Rex Warner and Th. D. Frangopoulos with an introduction by Rex Warner (London 1967) 35-6, 63, 55-6 and 65.

18. "Ὁ Μακρυγιάννης καὶ ὁ Νεοελληνικὸς Μῦθος", 442.

19. Μακρυγιάννη Ἀπομνημονεύματα. Εἰσαγωγή — Σχόλια Σπύρου Ι. Ἀσδραχᾶ (Athens n.d.) κε-κστ'.

economy to a trading, money-lending-based one, and on the other the heroic spirit of *armatolismos*, perhaps in an idealized abstraction. These two basic motivating forces can explain Makriyannis's subsequent political activity to an illuminating extent: the demand for a just society, the fair reward of those who fought for independence, constitutional rule, and the neutralisation of *kotzabasisdhismos* and Othonian authoritarianism. Asdrachas's work is important, though couched in a language which is not always easy to follow, but it still does not analyse sufficiently the actual beliefs of Makriyannis expressed in the *Memoirs*.

The starting-point, then, must be the text of the *Memoirs*. Two preliminary remarks are in order here. The first concerns the narrative structure of the *Memoirs*. It is a simple matter to point to deficiencies of historical detail, omission of important facts, repetitions, digressions, long-windedness, and lapses of logical sequence, all of which might be considered as serious flaws.<sup>20</sup> Makriyannis is neither an academic historian nor a literary stylist in any conventional sense. Why then is he, for Seferis, "the most important prose writer in modern Greek literature"?<sup>21</sup> One reason that might be offered is the essential integrity (in both senses) of the *Memoirs*. Despite the "flaws" mentioned above, the work has a remarkable coherence, which derives from four main factors: the basic chronological ordering of the narrative (despite the digressions), the personality of the author, the natural homogeneity of his language,<sup>22</sup> and the underlying theme of patriotism. And because of this coherence we can form a reliable

20. See, for example, Vlachoyannis, *Memoirs*, A 87, and Michailidis, "Ο Μακρυγιάννης και ὁ Νεοελληνικὸς Μῦθος", 441. Makriyannis criticizes himself for some of these shortcomings in his prologue: *Memoirs* A 105.8-9, 25-7. All references to the text of the *Memoirs* are by volume (A or B), page and line of the Vlachoyannis 1947 edition. Passages quoted are adapted into the monotonic system with some modernization of spelling.

21. Seferis, *On the Greek Style*, 54. The sentence continues: "if not the greatest — since we also have Papadiamantis".

22. Magda Stroungari's corrective study, "Ο λογιωτατισμὸς καὶ ἡ ἐπίδρασή του στὰ γραφτά τοῦ Μακρυγιάννη", *Δωδώνη* 8 (1979) 111-215, carefully documents the extent of learned influence on Makriyannis's language, but in some respects she overstates her case, by regarding as learnedisms some purely graphic peculiarities of Makriyannis's hand (such as final — v) and failing to make sufficient allowance for conservative dialect elements. For informative discussion on this point I am grateful to Christoforos Charalambakis.

picture of the man and his views by drawing on widely scattered material from the *Memoirs*, and of course from his other writings. Makriyannis expresses his views on a given subject not by arguing logically from *a* to *b* to *c* to *d*, but by returning to the subject again and again, by repeating himself frequently, but also by adding something new or expressing a different aspect of the topic with each new mention. This is the method of a man who lacks the necessary formal training, and mental and literary discipline, to assemble all his arguments at one time and to order them in a tight logical sequence; but this does not mean that his views are necessarily simple or naive. I have laboured this point because Makriyannis has sometimes been misrepresented as unconscious, artless and primitive; a kind of folk singer in prose whose naive and intuitive spontaneity, without the conscious control of trained artistic faculties, is inferior to the role of the creative artist and must be judged by different aesthetic criteria.<sup>23</sup> George Theotokas, in his sensible and restrained article on Makriyannis, firmly rejects such an interpretation. He maintains that although Makriyannis is of the people (*laikos*), he is also intensely individual in his work and in his life, and that despite the deceptive simplicity of his phraseology he is a complex author.<sup>24</sup> If we accept such a view of Makriyannis, and I believe we can and should, it is perfectly possible to examine the *Memoirs* critically as a literary text.

The second preliminary point to be made, prior to an investigation of Makriyannis's ideology as expressed in the *Memoirs*, is that there is often a considerable chronological separation between the time of writing and the events described. As we know, Makriyannis began writing in February 1829 and by 1832 he had brought his narration of events up to date, that is as far as the end of the second book. Events from the arrival of Othon in January 1833 down to 1840 seem to have been written more or less in the form of a diary, written up at infrequent intervals as he found the opportunity. Here, in 1840, he intended to end his memoirs and in due course to arrange for their publication. However, between 1840 and 1844 — the years in which

23. See, for instance, K. Paraschos, "Ο "ἄσποῦδαχτος" Μακρυγιάννης καὶ τὸ μέτρο τῶν αἰσθητικῶν κριτηρίων", *Φιλολογικὴ Πρωτοχρονιά* 2 (1944) 17-21.

24. Theotokas, *Πνευματικὴ Πορεία*, 148-9.

Makriyannis was heavily involved in the conspiracy which eventually achieved the promulgation of the 1844 Constitution — the manuscript was consigned to Tinos for safekeeping and he appears to have kept notes of what happened during this period; when he was able to recover the manuscript in 1844, he wrote up the events of the preceding four years from his notes. The narrative continues to 1850 and in that year he added an epilogue, rewrote the introduction and early part of the text, and then apparently regarded the work as ready for publication (apart from three pages added in 1851).<sup>25</sup> We know little about his method of working but it seems that, even for those sections which were written up more or less contemporaneously with the events themselves, days, weeks or even months may have intervened. The whole of the first book, of course, covering the narrative of the War of Independence, was written a matter of years after the events. Very rarely he uses the word *σήμερα* and it is clear that he is writing on the very day of events. But he does not appear to have kept a daily diary; rather he wrote up whole sections in one go, relying on his memory. The details of composition do not matter here — only the general principle. It means that we need not necessarily believe that the attitudes and opinions on a particular situation are those he felt at the time. We need not accept that any of his ideology in fact antedates 1829, when he began writing. His high ideals of serving the *patrida* may not represent his motivation at the time of his initiation into the *Philiki Etaireia* in 1820 or during the years of the independence struggle. On the other hand the reader may be subjectively convinced by Makriyannis's sincerity and claims of truthfulness. One of the aims of such a study as this might therefore be to keep a look-out for any indications of Makriyannis's trustworthiness or otherwise on matters of political concepts or values, when he is recalling distant events.

The present study is intended as a small contribution to our understanding of the political consciousness and ideology of the Greek people in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>26</sup> It will

25. On the stages of writing, see Vlachoyannis, *Memoirs*, A 89 ff., Asdrachas, *Μακρυγιάννη Ἀπομνημονεύματα*, κ' ff., and Lidderdale, *Makriyannis*, xii. There are some differences between the three accounts, and many questions of detailed chronology remain unclear.

concentrate almost exclusively on the writings of Makriyannis himself, and indeed only on his two extensive works, the *Memoirs* and the *Visions and Wonders*. Occasional reference will be made to some other important texts of the period, and of the preceeding century, where they have something significant to offer relevant to a particular point. But it is not possible, or intended here to interpret Makriyannis's political ideology against the background of the welter of relevant material which the historian of Greek political thought will have to work through: political pamphlets, proclamations, newspapers, memoirs, parliamentary proceedings, government papers, travellers' impressions and so on. Consequently it would be premature to put forward confident answers to questions such as the following: To what extent are Makriyannis's views typical of the urbanised classes post-1821? Is he giving expression to beliefs that are widely subscribed to, or is he an isolated but sincere champion of views that are only paid lip-service by politicians? What is the source of these novel concepts of *patrida*, *ethnos* and *patriotismos* — novel that is for the mass of the population — and how were they developed and disseminated?

Ignoring such larger and fundamental questions, this paper will restrict itself to examining uses of words in the *Memoirs* (and to a lesser extent in the *Visions*) which relate to ethnic identity, nationalism, devotion to the fatherland and related religious and social obligations. It has already been suggested that patriotism is the major theme of the *Memoirs* and a simple count of the occurrence of words containing the root *patri-* shows how prominent it in fact is. The words *patris* and *patrida* occur 606 times in the book's 439 pages.<sup>27</sup> If we add to this the occurrences of *patriotismos* (58 times), *patriotikos* and its adverbs (51 times),

26. For an approach to this question, see K. Moskof, *Ἡ ἔθνικὴ καὶ κοινωνικὴ συνείδησις στὴν Ἑλλάδα 1830-1909. Ἰδεολογία τοῦ μεταπρατικοῦ χώρου*, 3rd ed. (Athens 1978).

27. My figures are now confirmed by the work of Kyriazidis and Kazazis (*Τὸ Λεξιλόγιο*, A 60-1). The figure for *patris/patrida* of course includes its use for the individual's home town, village or region — as opposed to the national fatherland. A rough count reveals 27 instances where *patrida* refers indisputably to the 'local' fatherland. I have chosen to render *patrida* throughout as 'fatherland' to preserve the Greek etymological association.



*patriotis* (144 times),<sup>28</sup> and the few instances of *filopatris*, *antipatriotis* and *sympatriotissa* (8 in all), the total increases to something around 867, that is about two occurrences on average per page, of words etymologically linked with the crucial concept of "fatherland"; and in the vast majority of cases the semantic content of these words relates to a prospective or actual Greek national state, those who belong to it or affect its well-being positively or negatively, and the qualities which it demands. If we further consider in this quantitative way the use of words indicating Greek nationality, *Ellinas* and *Romios*, and their adjectival and abstract noun derivatives,<sup>29</sup> we can be in no doubt that the concepts embodied in all these terms figured largely and persistently in Makriyannis's thoughts as he was writing his *Memoirs*. In the *Visions* the "fatherland" group of words appears with surprising frequency (though not as often as in the *Memoirs*): *patris/patrida* occurs 127 times (of which only about 12 do not refer specifically to Greece); *patriotismos* is found 7 times and *patriotis* and *patriotikos* 2 and 3 times respectively.<sup>30</sup>

So much for crude quantitative indications of the importance of concepts of national identity in these two texts. But what are the semantic and emotional associations of these words for Makriyannis? We can make some progress by looking more closely at their specific meanings in the contexts in which they appear.

To take first the words that indicate Greekness, it comes as no surprise that both *Ellinas* and *Romios* occur in the *Memoirs*. Before 1821 it is natural that *Romios* should be the predominant word, indeed the only word which Makriyannis uses for a Greek (although he does employ *Ellas* as a geographical term).<sup>31</sup> The mixed population of Arta is referred to as Ρωμαίοι και Τούρκοι

28. In about 30 cases the word means "compatriot" in the narrow sense of "from the same village, town or region".

29. According to Krylazidis-Kazazis (Το Λεξιλόγιο, A 25 and A 69) their frequency is as follows: Έλληνας (221 times), ελληνικός (11), το Ελληνικόν (1), Ρωμαίος (23), το Ρωμαίικον (8), ρωμαίικα (1).

30. To give a rough idea of the frequency of the "fatherland" words, it may be noted that the text of the *Visions* runs to 178 pages (of fairly large print).

31. *Memoirs* A 113.23 and 116.32. The second case is very definitely a geographical term: εις την ανατολική Ελλάδα. It might be argued, however, that in the first passage — κάτι καταγινόμεστε να λευτερώσομεν την Ελλάδα (words attributed to Kapodistrias) — the word *Ellas* is employed to denote the idea of a free Greek state.

(A113.8). The naively optimistic hopes of a member of the *Philiki Etaireia*, an unnamed merchant of Patras, are expressively rendered in the phrase: Θα κοιμηθούμε με τους Τούρκους και θα ξυπνήσουμε με τους Ρωμαίους (A117.29-30). The first time that Makriyannis uses the word *Ellinas* in his narrative occurs in the context of the engagement at Koulia on Makrynoros in late May of 1821:

Και εις το Μακρυνόρο, εις την Κούλια ήταν πολλά ολίγοι Έλληνες και τους χτύπησαν γενναίως και πατριωτικώς και σκότωσαν αρκετούς και πλῆγωσαν . . . Και μαθαίνοντας αυτόν τον χαλασμόν των Τούρκων εις την Κούλια, ψύχωσαν οι Έλληνες . . . (A124.9-13).<sup>32</sup>

Thereafter the word *Ellinas* is found very frequently, much more so than *Romios*.<sup>33</sup> The occasional uses of the latter term, after 1821, are revealing: in several instances Makriyannis uses it accurately to render the opinions or attributed words of a non-Greek: an Albanian Turk, a favourite of Ali Pasha, is sent to Misolongi and Vrachori να ιδεί τα τρέχοντα των Ρωμαίων, αν δουλεύουν δια τον αφέντη τους τον Αλήπασα, όπως έλεγαν (A139.24-6). Later Makriyannis goes to Ibrahim Pasha on behalf of the Greeks beleaguered at Neokastro (Pylos) to negotiate terms for their surrender. He tries to pass himself off as an ex-bodyguard of Ali Pasha and thus deliberately uses the word *Romios* of the Greeks.<sup>34</sup> Later Ibrahim justifies his breaking of the truce by maintaining that the Greeks had also violated their promises in similar circumstances at Nafplio. The words which Makriyannis puts into his mouth are: "Και οι Ρωμαίοι . . . κάμαν συνθήκες και βάσταξαν τους πασάδες" (A249.29-250.1).

32. The abandonment of *Romios* in favour of *Ellinas* at this point in the narrative is noted by D. Skiotis, 'The Nature of the Modern Greek Nation: the Romaic Strand', in *The "Past" in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. S. Vyonis (Malibu 1978) 161. For a critical bibliography on *Romios* and related terms see M. Mandouvalou, 'Ρωμαίος — Ρωμιός και Ρωμιοσύνη', *Μαντατοφόρος* 22 (1983) 34-72.

33. As already pointed out *Ellinas* occurs 21 times; *Romios* and its feminine counterparts occur 23 times, of which seven are in the narration of events up to the outbreak of the War of Independence. (The last of these is in the account of the beginning of hostilities at Patras: A 119.17.) These seven instances occur in the first 14 pages of text (excluding the address to the readers). The remaining 16 occurrences of the word (spread over more than 420 pages of text) will be fully discussed below.

34. A 246.2: ήρθαμε εδώ, εις τους Ρωμαίους. Compare the use of Μισίρι for Egypt in the previous line.

Again Mohammed Ali, presumably during the crisis of 1838-40, sent Ilarion Karatzoglou on a mission to Crete with γράμματα σε Τούρκους και Ρωμαίους Κρητικούς (B113.8). Here too it seems that Makriyannis is getting inside the mind of Mohammed and using the word that *he* would have used for the Cretans: *Romaioi*.<sup>35</sup> Alternatively the Cretan Greeks may be referred to as *Romaioi* because they have not yet been liberated. There is one piece of evidence elsewhere in the *Memoirs* for such a usage. After the constitutional rising of 1843, Makriyannis's involvement in secret moves for the realisation of the *Megali Idea* brings him into contact with a Turkish subject who is at odds with the Sultan. This Turk sends a prudent Greek — έναν φρόνιμον Ρωμιόν (B189.18) — to plot with Makriyannis. It may be argued that this *Romios* cannot be described as *Ellinas* because he is not a citizen of the Greek state.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, when Makriyannis has earlier referred to Greeks living in Istanbul as *Ellines*, it is almost certain that they are in fact Greek subjects engaging in trade within the Ottoman Empire.<sup>37</sup>

There is another group of instances where Makriyannis uses the word *Romios* in a strict and precise way: when he refers to the period before 1821. (We have already noted the consistent use of *Romios* in the narrative down to 1821.) Describing one of the paintings he commissioned, in which is depicted the heroic resistance of the klefts during the *Tourkokratia*, Makriyannis writes: Και τροφή είχαν το κρέας των τύραγνων Ρωμαίων, όσοι ήσαν σύμφωνοι με τους Τούρκους (B108.9-10).

Similarly, when recalling his oath of initiation into the *Philiki Etaireia* he asks rhetorically: όταν ορκίστηκα να σηκώσουμε ντουφέκι να πάγω κι εγώ να πολεμήσω, με Ρωμαίους είπαμε;

35. Other cases where Makriyannis assumes a non-Greek point-of-view and employs the word *Romios* are: A 247.17, ούτε Τούρκισσες ξέρω, ούτε Ρωμιές (Makriyannis is addressing Ibrahim); B 27.30, οι Τούρκοι πήραν μίαν γυναίκα του οκού 'χε, Ρωμιά (the Greek wife of Ali Pasha).

36. Similarly, a Greek who comes over from the Turkish camp with intelligence about Turkish losses at the Battle of Bostania is a *Romios*: προσκυνισμένος από τους Τούρκους Ρωμιάς (A 309.6) — in Lidderdale's translation (*Makriyannis*, 129) "a Greek who did homage to the Sultan".

37. B 103.28-9: τους Έλληνες εις την Κωνσταντινούπολη οι Τούρκοι τους χάψωναν και τους κατάρτεχαν. The incident took place in 1840, when Greece refused to ratify a commercial treaty with Turkey; see D. Dakin, *The Unification of Greece 1770-1923* (London 1972) 73.

με Τούρκους (A197.24-5). In 1820 it was appropriate to speak of *Romaioi* rather than *Ellines*. a similar explanation may be offered for the use of *Romios* in the eulogy of Alexis Noutsos: Πολλούς Ρωμαίους, Οβραίους, Τούρκους εγλύτωνα από την κρεμάλα (A158.6). In all probability this refers to Noutsos's activities as counsellor of Ali Pasha before the outbreak of the revolution. But Makriyannis continues: Τέλος ήταν πασάς Ρωμιάς, αγαπημένος απ' όλους τους σημαντικούς Έλληνες στρατιντικούς, πολιτικούς, θρησκευτικούς (A 158.7-8). The characterisation of Noutsos as a *Romaioi* pasha requires no ingenious explanation: it is an effective turn of phrase for one who, while retaining his Greek ethnic identity (and Christian faith) succeeded in attaining high office at the court of Ali Pasha.

Another passage juxtaposing the terms *Romaioi* and *Ellines* occurs later in Book 1. Makriyannis refers to a treacherous priest who έκανε τον άγιον εις τους Ρωμαίους and went around all the military camps and towns and islands και μάθαινε όλα τα μυστικά των Ελλήνων (A185.8-10). Again the military commanders and others in authority are "correctly" designated *Ellines*; but the ordinary Greek villagers and common soldiery are *Romaioi*, with perhaps a touch of sarcasm for their gullibility.

We are coming close here to the derogatory sense of *Romios*, which survived the foundation of a Hellenic national state and survives still. This usage emphasises the effects of the centuries of subjugation to the Turks and it is therefore not surprising to find Makriyannis using the word *Romios* in direct combination with "Turks", when referring pejoratively to some of his compatriots. Criticising his soldiers for their unwillingness to make sacrifices for the cause, he complains despairingly: "I would have killed myself rather than suffer from Greeks [Ρωμαίους] what I had suffered from Turks".<sup>38</sup> Similarly, in his Epilogue — a scathing indictment of the self-interest of the political hierarchy — he exclaims: "How much did the countryfolk suffer — and from the Greeks [Ρωμαίους], not from the Turks!"<sup>39</sup>

There is one further instance of the use of *Romios*, this time without pejorative connotations, in combination with "Turks": in a general comment on the Zografos paintings Makriyannis

38. A 251.31-2, in Lidderdale's translation (*Makriyannis*, 81).

39. B 210.17-18, again in Lidderdale's translation (p. 214).

states that "the names of the Turkish and Greek leaders were inscribed underneath".<sup>40</sup> The explicit collocation of Turk and *Romios* illustrated by these last three examples (and by some of the other passages discussed above) seems to reflect a deep-down antithesis between these two terms of racial identity. Although Makriyannis has apparently trained himself to substitute the word *Ellinas* in the post-1821 context, when the point of view is Greek,<sup>41</sup> there are times when *Romios* still presents itself to him as the appropriate word. To put it another way, *Ellinas* does not cover the entire semantic range of *Romios*.

The antithesis of *Ellinas* and *Tourkos* is also naturally a common one in the account of events after 1821. The significance of the battle of Komboti (June 1821) is emphasised in the phrase: εκείνη η μέρα εκεί ήταν η τύχη και των Τούρκων και Ελλήνων (A125.8-9). There is no doubt that from 1821 onwards *Ellines* is the standard term for Greeks; moreover, Makriyannis uses it frequently, consciously and deliberately as a term of approval, respect and honour — it is as if the word is permanently underlined. We often meet with the expression οι αθάνατοι Έλληνες,<sup>42</sup> which is little more than a romantic description of fighting prowess (not a term for a select body of soldiers). Very similar is the use of the phrase το άνθος των Ελλήνων,<sup>43</sup> of men killed in battle.

But the word *Ellinas* is also charged with historical and cultural connotations, so that Makriyannis can use it pointedly to remind Kapodistrias of his ethnic origin and to prick his conscience: Εσύ ο Έλληνας, ο φωτισμένος, ο ζυγωμένος εις τους δυνατούς, αν ήθελες να τους μιλήσεις ως τίμιος Έλληνας, ως Κυβερνήτης αυτηνών των δυστυχισμένων [. . .] πού είναι η δικαιοσύνη σου; (B10.28-32). Makriyannis certainly shows a great deal of awareness of the ancient Greek world and its cultural significance:

40. Π 109.19-20: τα ονόματα των αρχηγών Τούρκων και Ρωμαίων γραμμένα από κάτω.

41. It has been shown that the *agonistes* deliberately adopted for themselves the ethnic name *Ellines* and renounced the label *Romioi* from the very beginning of the Revolution. See I. Th. Kakridis, Φως Έλληνικό — Πανεπιστημιακοί Λόγοι (Athens 1963) 78 and 81 (unavailable to me, but quoted by D.G. Tsaousis in Έλληνισμός — Έλληνικότητα. Ίδεολογικοί βιοματρικοί άξονες της νεοελληνικής κοινωνίας. Έπιμέλεια Δ.Γ. Τσαούσης (Athens 1983) 16 [Έλληνική Κοινωνία I]).

42. For example: A 160.16, 161.6, 237.2, 282.7, 306.16, 311.11, 311.19.

43. Examples are: A 234.16, B 9.14, 55.10-11.

this is not to say that he had a detailed knowledge of ancient Greek civilisation — his knowledge is restricted to a few names of significant individuals and little more. But his appreciation of its value is sincere and even reverential. The most noteworthy passage in this connection is a digression of some length sparked off by an expression of gratitude to the French officers who averted anarchy and bloodshed in Nafplio after the assassination of Kapodistrias in 1832. After reeling off an impressive list of classical names — Lycurgus, Plato, Socrates, Aristides, Themistocles, Leonidas, Thrasyboulus, Demosthenes — Makriyannis imagines them all in the underworld lamenting the sufferings of their wretched fatherland: Χάνοντας αυτήνοι, εχάθη και η πατρίδα τους η Ελλάς, έσβησε τ' όνομά της (B51.26-7). He then upbraids their enlightened disciples, the Europeans, for schooling the modern Greeks in evil and corruption — a betrayal of the spirit of their classical education all the more despicable because their victims are the descendants of their own teachers. When he wants to refer specifically to the ancient Greeks, Makriyannis sometimes uses the phrase οι παλαιοί Έλληνες.<sup>44</sup> In contrast with the Europeans' fear of and connivance at the Sultan, the Greek revolutionaries — μια χούφτα απογόνοι εκεινών των παλαιών Ελλήνων — "tore off the mask of the 'Grand Signior', the Sultan".<sup>45</sup>

Makriyannis's view of Greek history is not surprisingly a simplistic one, witness his brave riposte to the French Admiral de Rigny when the latter draws attention to the weakness of the Greek positions at the Mills of Lerna: "Even though we be few when compared with Ibrahim's host, we have comfort in some sort, in that fate has always kept us Greeks in short number. For from the beginning of the world till the end, from ancient times until now, all the wild beasts have made war upon us to devour us yet they could not. They take bites from us but a leavening is left . . ."<sup>46</sup> In these few words we see Makriyannis's concept of Greek history, a simple profession of faith in the continuity of Hellenism.

44. Examples: Π 51.17, 53.7, 186.16. (The word αρχαίος does not occur in the *Memoirs*.)

45. Π 51.33-5. See Lidderdale, *Makriyannis*, 145. The whole passage to the end of Book II (*ibid.* pp. 145-9) reveals much about Makriyannis's attitudes to the Hellenic past and to the contemporary European powers.

46. A 256.5-8. The translation is Lidderdale's (*Makriyannis*, 85).

Not all the Greeks of his day, of course, are aware of this awesome heritage and not all of them live up to the name of Hellene. In a bitter attack on some of the political leaders of the War of Independence, directed particularly at Georgios Koundouriotis, Makriyannis sounds off at the standards of *αρετή* which these men's behaviour reveals: *Να δικαιοσύνη, να κυβερνήται των νέων Ελλήνων!* (A231.25-6). The implicit contrast is with the *αρετή* which Makriyannis attributes to his ancient Greek heroes. So the word *Ellinas* certainly carries with it, for Makriyannis, an awareness of past greatness and its use implies a comparison between his contemporaries and their ancient forebears, which generates an ideal to which the present-day bearers of the name should aspire.<sup>47</sup>

As we have seen, *Ellinas* is for Makriyannis the normal word to denote a Greek after 1821 and, thereafter, the much restricted use of *Romios* can be justified either on grounds of historical veracity or as expressing a semantic nuance not covered by *Ellinas*. The situation is scarcely different when we examine the terms *Ελληνικό* and *Ρωμαίικο*. Makriyannis uses the substantivised adjective *τι Ελληνικόν* (the Greek cause) only once: *γεννήθη και το δικό μας το Ελληνικόν* (A129.12-13). He is discussing the problems caused by the arrival of hordes of Turkish troops to deal with Ali Pasha. The suggestion is that the Greeks should declare themselves on the side of Ali Pasha, mainly to win support from the Albanian Turks, and that they should advance their own cause — *το Ελληνικόν* — under cover of working for Ali. Elsewhere, though, Makriyannis always refers to the Greek cause as *το Ρωμαίικο(ν)*. He comments scathingly on the naivety of Greeks who looked for help from Ali Pasha: *αυτός ο τύραγνος να φέρει το Ρωμαίικον και την λευτεριά της πατρίδος* (A117.9-10). On two occasions during the War of Independence, internecine struggles cause Makriyannis to exclaim: *σιχάθηκα το Ρωμαίικο(ν)*<sup>48</sup> — the word here carrying much of its modern somewhat pejorative connotation. Perhaps rather less pejorative is its use in the context of an argument with Kolokotronis in 1828: *Αφού σας φκιάσαμεν το Ρωμαικον, βλαφτήκετε οπου μας*

47. An analysis of *Ellinas*, *Romios* and related words in the *Visions* would not contribute significantly to the present discussion and therefore has not been attempted here.

48. A 144.29-30 and 202.22.

*κάμετε και είλωτες* (B12.11-12). Here Makriyannis is astride his familiar hobby-horse of the rights of the veterans, who have fashioned the *Ρωμαίικο*, and their wretched treatment at the hands of get-rich-quick politicians. Nonetheless even here Makriyannis's use of the word has something depreciative about it. It contains an element of self-criticism, if you like: we were stupid enough to trust you, we fought for a simple ideal thinking that it would lead to something pure and good, and now look what you have done with it and to us!<sup>49</sup>

The ideological contrast between these two groups — the honest *agonistes* and the self-interested politicians — is of course a dominant theme of Makriyannis's narrative, particularly after 1828. It is encapsulated in his use of the terms *patriotis* and *patriotismos*, which will be considered below. But there is another term indicating "not of our group" which may be briefly discussed here. It is the adjective *ξένος*. For Makriyannis, the word meant, as it can still mean, someone from another place, whether Greek or non-Greek. So when the people of Ydra object to being garrisoned by mainland Greek troops, they protest: *δεν θέλουμε τα ξένα στρατεύματα εις το νησί μας!* (A210.24-5). They finally agree to a peace-keeping force made up of *ανθρώπους δικούς μας κι από τους ξένους* (A210.27). Similarly the mainland troops assembled in Crete for the rising of 1841 are *ξένοι* (B116.11). Refusing further reinforcements from Roumeli, the members of the Cretan committee declare proudly that they are Cretans and the *ξένοι* who had come were quite enough (B116.17). One could quote much more evidence, from various sources, for the rivalries and differences between Greeks of different regions, during the War of Independence and after.

Despite his insistent use of *Ellines* for all Greeks, Makriyannis is also aware that group identity still exists primarily at a local or regional, rather than a national, level. This emerges clearly from his use of *patrida* in the traditional sense of "place of birth", and of *patriotis* as a "compatriot", i.e. someone from the same village or region. He opens the first chapter of his *Memoirs*, in fact, with the words *Η πατρίς της γεννήσεώς μου είναι από το*

49. The remaining uses of *το Ρωμαίικο* occur at: A 117.29, 119.22 (both before 1821), 143.5 (here the view-point is non-Greek) and 190.7 (with implied criticism of the rapaciousness of his troops). After 1821 the term is never used without irony or sarcasm.

Λιδορίκι (A109.1).<sup>50</sup> The addition of the words της γεννήσεώς μου is due not so much to a distinction between the local and the national *patrida*, but to the fact that during his childhood he moved first with his family to Livadia and later to Arta. By the age of 14 he already had three *patrides*. But later in the *Memoirs*, he explicitly refers to Lidoriki on several occasions as η πατρίδα μου. This use of *patrida* occurs frequently in the *Memoirs*<sup>51</sup> — individuals are referred to as having Athens, or Kavala, or Valtos, or Arcadia etc. as their *patrida* — and it occurs alongside the other meaning of the word: “the fatherland”, that is Greece. *Patriotis* in the narrow sense is also frequent, though greatly outnumbered by instances where it means “patriot”.<sup>52</sup> It may be argued that sense and syntax normally prevent any possible confusion between the two sets of meanings. It is true that the narrow sense of *patrida* is almost invariably accompanied by a possessive pronoun, and that such a construction is somewhat rarer in the wider sense.<sup>53</sup> Nonetheless the consequences of using the same word for the two separate and potentially conflicting loyalties need to be more fully investigated.<sup>54</sup>

It is perhaps partly in response to this problem that Makriyannis often uses *patrida* in the national sense in conjunction with another word of related meaning: religion, society, the king. Such collocations are not merely rhetorical but an indication that for

50. Cf. *Visions* 206.32, εις την πατρίδα της γεννήσεώς σου (God addressing Makriyannis); 114.9, ολέθριους σκοπούς οπού 'χαν δια την πατρίδα της γεννήσεώς τ'ς και την θρησκείαν τους . . . ; 181.9, εις την πατρίδα της γεννήσεώς μου και θρησκείας μου. In the last two cases the national fatherland is meant.

51. The sense of “national fatherland” is, however, overwhelmingly predominant (see note 27 above).

52. See note 28 above.

53. For example, Makriyannis writes of Skarmitzos: Η πατρίς του από το Βάλτο ήταν εις το μυστήριον και θυσίασε δια την πατρίδα αρκετά και την ιδίαν του ζωή (A 126.5-7).

54. In documents of the *Philiki Etaireia* we find a distinction drawn between η δική μας πατρίδα (the individual's “local fatherland”) and η γενική or κοινή πατρίδα (the “national fatherland”). See George D. Frangos, ‘The Philiki Etaireia: A Premature National Coalition’, in R. Clogg (ed.), *The Struggle for Greek Independence* (London 1973) 87-103, especially 98-9. Once only, in the introduction to the *Memoirs*, Makriyannis uses such a phrase for Greece: η πατρίδα γενική του κάθε ενοῦ (A 107.15). He does some half a dozen times employ the adverb γενικῶς (a favourite word of his) in close connection with πατρίδα (e.g. B. 101.12, κι εκείνον τον έχασες και την πατρίδα γενικῶς), but the meaning is hardly the same as the phrase of the Etaireists.

Makriyannis certain concepts are inextricably linked together: the one inevitably involves the other. The commonest such association is of *patrida* and *thriskeia* (religion), which occurs some 44 times in the *Memoirs* and 77 times in the *Visions*. It is clear that Makriyannis's concept of a Greek national state is inseparable from Orthodox Christianity. As far as the *Memoirs* are concerned, these two entities provide the impetus for his work, as he tells us in his address to his readers: Μπαίνοντας εις αυτό το έργον και ακολουθώντας να γράφω δυστυχήματα αναντίον της πατρίδος και θρησκείας . . . (A101.8-10). Moreover, they constitute the purpose of his writing: δια να χρησιμεύουν αυτά όλα εις τους μεταγενεστέρους και να μάθουν να θυσιάζουν δια την πατρίδα τους και θρησκεία τους περισσότερη αρετή, να ζήσουν ως άνθρωποι σ' αυτήν την πατρίδα και μ' αυτήν την θρησκείαν (A103.9-11).

This pair of concepts occurs again and again as the ideal for which every individual should strive: Γλυκότερον πράμα δεν είναι άλλο από την πατρίδα και θρησκεία (A191.20-1). It was, after all, the basis of the oath which he swore on his initiation into the *Philiki Etaireia*, at least as he remembered it several years later: Η ευκή του παπά του ευλογημένου και της πατρίδος μου και θρησκείας μου, ως την σήμερα δεν μ' άφησε ο Θεός να ντροπιαστώ (A114.26-8).<sup>55</sup> So he writes of the moment of his initiation. And later, during the war, he alludes to the same oath:

Ορκιστήκαμε εις αυτό ο Κατατάσιος, ο Γάτζος κι εγώ να είμαστε σύμφωνοι κι αχώριστοι δια την πατρίδα και θρησκεία κατά τον όρκον οπού κάμαμε όταν πρωτοσηκωθήκαμε δια την λευτερίαν μας (A212.17-19)

Sometimes Makriyannis links the two words *patrida* and *thriskeia* with a third or further related concepts, such as Θεός, or η ηθική

55. Cf. A 114.20-1. Describing his decision to take the oath of initiation, Makriyannis represents himself as having weighed up all the dangers and struggles that lay ahead, before concluding: Θα τα πάθω δια την λευτερίαν της πατρίδος μου και της θρησκείας μου. In fact there seems to be nothing in the surviving texts of either the First Oath or the Great Oath that corresponds to Makriyannis's phrase linking fatherland and religion. The texts are conveniently available in English translation in R. Clogg (ed.), *The Movement for Greek Independence 1770-1821. A collection of documents* (London 1976) 175-82. For a different version of the oaths, see L.I. Vranousis and N. Kamarianos (edd.), 'Αθανασίου Ξοδίου, 'Η Έταιρεία των Φιλικών και τὰ Πρώτα Συμβάντα τοῦ 1821. 'Ανέκδοτα 'Απομνημονεύματα, Προκηρύξεις, Γράμματα κ. ἄ. Κείμενα (Athens 1964) 103 ff.

εις την κιονωνία, or simply η κοινωνία, and on one occasion he joins them with the title of Kapodistrias: πατρίδα δοξάζω, θρησκεία και την Εξοχότη σου (B25.26-7). In a full statement of *all* the qualities which the new Greek nation requires, he remarks that if anyone had told them what liberty would be like, they would have asked God to leave them under the Turks for as many years again, όσο να γνωρίσουν οι άνθρωποι τι θα ειπεί πατρίδα, τι θα ειπεί θρησκεία, τι θα ειπεί φιλοτιμία, αρετή και τιμιότη. Αυτά λείπουν απ' όλους εμάς, στρατιωτικούς και πολιτικούς (B201.21-4). In the *Visions* this tendency to extend the collocation of *patrida* and *thriskeia* is even more marked. In about half the instances (38 out of 77) where the two words appear in collocation, they are linked with one or more further concepts.<sup>56</sup> The commonest extension, which occurs some 17 times, consists of phrases like "all the honourable men of society (of whatever religion)". Two examples will suffice:

να σώσει . . . την ματοκυλισμένη μου πατρίδα και θρησκεία και όσους τίμιους ανθρώπους, όποιος θρησκείας και αν είναι, όσοι φέρνουν δοξολογίαν εις τον Θεόν και εις την βασιλείαν του (63.11-14);

να μου σώσει πρώτα την πατρίδα μου και την θρησκεία μου και γενικώς τους τίμιους ανθρώπους της κοινωνίας, όσοι φέρνουν δοξολογίαν εις τον Θεό και εις την βασιλείαν του, όποιος θρησκείας και αν είναι (121.18-22).

The second most common way in which Makriyannis extends the dyad in the *Visions* is by means of a first person pronoun (or a second person pronoun where Makriyannis himself is addressed), e.g.

Άρχισα να κάμω τις μετάνοιες μου και την αμαρτωλή μου προσευκή εις τους σωτήρας της πατρίδος μου και θρησκείας μου και μένα του αμαρτωλού . . . (48.28-31);

όσους σε κιντύνεψαν και κιντυνεύουν την πατρίδα σου και την θρησκείαν σου και εσένα αδικώς (88.29-31).

56. The list embraces the following: "humanity in general" (5 times), "all the nations", "those you pray for", "the innocent", "our local affairs", "the churches you intend to build", "these unfortunates", "the Constitution", "the King" (once each). The two commonest types of addition are discussed above.

Such instances (which number about eight) indicate how clearly Makriyannis now identifies himself with the fate of his fatherland and religion.<sup>57</sup>

But mostly *patrida* and *thriskeia* stand together as a diptych representing Makriyannis's primary values,<sup>58</sup> with *patrida* coming first in the great majority of cases. (In many of the exceptions where *thriskeia* precedes *patrida*<sup>59</sup> the context is specifically religious anyway.) This dominant order of precedence, which holds good even in the highly religious *Visions*, invites the conclusion that *patrida*, not *thriskeia*, occupies pride of place in Makriyannis's scheme of values.

A few further examples will illustrate his view of the *patrida*. A key word associated with *patrida* in several instances is *υπάρχει* (exists). Advising Gouras to cease his quarrel with Odysseas for the good of the cause, Makriyannis says: κι όταν υπάρξει η πατρίς, δεν σου χρειάζονται αρματολίκια (A169.16-17). The expression is exactly parallel to another he uses in a different context: όταν λευτερωθεί η πατρίδα, όποιος κάμει τα χρέη του — η πατρίδα είναι δίκια (A264.2-3). The year is 1825. Makriyannis is refusing honours for his part in the battle of the Mills of Lerna. For the *patrida* is not yet free; it does not exist in his terms. But when it does exist, he has the simple conviction that justice will be done to those who have contributed to the cause. The *patrida* is here an ideal waiting to be brought into existence. After the

57. These usages take a stage further his very frequent use of the possessive μου with *patrida* and *thriskeia* in both the texts examined here.

58. It is not suggested, of course, that the collocation is unique, let alone original, to Makriyannis. It is interesting to note the same phrase in the Χρονικό του Γαλαξειδίου, written in 1704, ed. G. Valetas (Athens 1944) 135: όλοι γά την πατρίδα και τή θρησκεία, συμπαθημένοι από όλες τές άμαρτίες. It recurs, in more learned garb, in the newspaper Έλληνικά Χρονικά for 22 October 1824: φυλάττοντες πάντοτε ακμάζοντα τόν προς τήν θρησκείαν και τήν πατρίδα αξιομιμήτου άφοσιωσέας σας (A. Koumariannou, Ό Τύπος στον Άγώνα, 2 vols. (Athens 1971) II 150-1). A common slogan of the Revolution was υπέρ πίστεως και πατρίδος. We may compare Solomos's phrase ή Πατρίδα και ή Πίστις from "The Poet's Thoughts" on his poem Οι Έλεύθεροι Πολιορκημένοι (D. Solomos, Άπαντα. Έπιμέλεια — Σημειώσεις Λίνου Πολίτη, 4th ed. (Athens 1979) I 207). Very much earlier we meet with the same phrase in the writings of Neofytos Rodinos (1570-1659): Δύο πράγματα από όλα περισσότερον μās φαίνεται, και είναι, ό άνθρωπος χρεώστης εις τήν ζωήν του να αγαπά και να διάφεντεύει, ήγουν τήν πίστιν του και τήν πατρίδα του (quoted by M. Vitti, Ιστορία της Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας (Athens 1978) 77).

59. Eight times in the *Memoirs*, six in the *Visions*.



War he can write that Kapodistrias wishes to harm εκείνους ποῦ ἡλικρινῶς αγωνίστηκαν και υπάρχει η πατρίδα (B31.24). Again he attributes its existence to the soldiers, not the politicians: από αυτούς υπάρχει η πατρίδα, από τους αγωνιστάς (B61.25-6).<sup>60</sup> Its existence depends on the qualities of virtue, patriotism and good sense: κάνουν την πατρίδα να υπάρξει και να ευτυχήσει (B175.31). Further evidence for this conception of the *patrida* can be seen in Makriyannis's use of the word νεκρανάστασις for the liberation of Greece from Turkish rule,<sup>61</sup> and his joyful exclamation on King Othon's arrival: Σήμερα ξαναγεννιέται η πατρίδα κι ανασταίνεται (B57.1).

The *patrida*, then, has a personified quality for Makriyannis. It can die and be reborn, it can prosper, suffer, be endangered or dishonoured. The phrase η πατρίς/πατρίδα κιντνεύει recurs almost every time there is a crisis which Makriyannis sees as threatening the success of the independence struggle, the internal security of the state, or its freedom from external intervention.<sup>62</sup> Another recurrent phrase is χάριτες χρωστάγει η πατρίς (or similar), whenever Makriyannis wishes to draw attention to some particularly significant act of bravery or patriotism.<sup>63</sup> And we see a fully developed personification of the *patrida* when Makriyannis apostrophises it in moments of emotion or despair.<sup>64</sup> Finally, as it is a sacred entity, it is entirely natural

60. Compare the words of a character in a late-nineteenth century short story, who, referring to his service in the War of Independence, exclaims triumphantly: "Έκαμα τήν Πατρίδα μου!" (A. Karkavitsas, 'Η Πατρίδα, in Παλιές Άγάπες, 3rd ed. (Athens 1925) 97).

61. B 107.29 and 217.10 Cf. Korais's use of ἀνάστασις in a similar sense in his Παπατρέχας (1818); quoted by G.P. Henderson, *The Revival of Greek Thought 1620-1830* (Edinburgh and London 1971) 159. And Book 5 of the Έλληνική Νομαρχία is entitled 'Η ἀνάστασις τοῦ γένους.

62. Cf. the same phrase, κινδυνεύει ἡ πατρίς, used three times by Spyridon Trikoupi in a speech of May 1825 (A. Koumariannou, 'Ο Τύπος στὸν Άγῶνα, A 177). In the *Memoirs* the verb κιντνεύω occurs 126 times and the noun κίντνος 30 times. Kyriazidis and Kazazis do not offer a word frequency list, but from their complete list of words (Το Λεξιλόγιο, vol. A) it may be deduced that κιντνεύω is the thirty-eighth most common verb, following (in descending order of frequency): είμαι, λέγω, πηγαίνω, κάμω, έχω, παίρνω, έρχομαι, θέλω, δίνω, γίνομαι, στέλνω, βλέπω, σκοτώνω, πιάνω, μιλάω, βάζω, αφίνω, φεύγω, μπαίνω, μένω, χάνω, μαθαίνω, βγαίνω, τρώγω, πολεμώ, φκειάινω, συνάζω, ξέρω, φέρνω, μπορώ, βρίσκω, βαστώ, σηκώνω, βγάζω, ριχνω, γράφω, σώνω.

63. The phrase occurs about eleven times.

64. Some examples of personification of (and apostrophe to) the *patrida*: Makriyannis

that Makriyannis should underline the truth of his words by swearing on the name of the fatherland.<sup>65</sup> Thus the concept of the *patrida* is a key one, running throughout the *Memoirs*, binding the constituent parts together, and conferring on the work a purpose over and above historical truth.

Mentions of the *patrida* in the *Visions*, although less frequent, cover the same kind of range of uses. But there is little positive glorification of the *patrida* here and the tone is generally pessimistic or even despondent, as often in the last books of the *Memoirs*. His use of the epithet ματοκυλισμένη (literally, "rolled in blood") illustrates the trend: it is first applied directly to the *patrida* close to the end of Book 3, and then a further four times in the *Memoirs*.<sup>66</sup> In the *Visions* the same epithet is attached to *patrida* nine times.<sup>67</sup> The frequent mentions of fatherland and religion in his prayers and visions now have a pathetic, obsessive quality. As in the *Memoirs* the reader senses here too "a dramatic realisation of an unfinished work, of a struggle for renewal that has ended despairingly".<sup>68</sup> The struggle of the *Visions* is just as much concerned with the *patrida* as it is in the *Memoirs*, despite the greater preoccupation with religion in the former.

The qualities and actions which are for the good of the *patrida* are summed up in the word *patriotismos*: Οι Έλληνες [. . .] διψούσαν δι' αρετή και δια πατριωτισμόν, Makriyannis tells Kapodistrias (B10.24-5). Those whom Makriyannis admires act με μεγάλον ζήλον και πατριωτισμόν, or με μεγάλον πατριωτισμόν και γενναιότητα, they are φιλοτιμία και πατριωτισμόν γιομάτοι όλοι. Surprisingly often, he uses the word

thanks it for honouring him with the rank of general (A 108.14-16), asks it to bless Gogos (A 128.5-6), bemoans the activities of the Areios Pagos (A 154.23-31), stresses the fatherland's debt to Kostas Lagoumitsis (A 278.4-6), and laments its lack of good rulers (B 91.8-10).

65. Typical oaths are: μα την πατρίδα (A 136.12, 139.8-9, 226.5, 253.14-15), να 'χω (την) κατάρα της πατρίδας (B 27.21-2, 121.12-13), μα τ' όνομα του Θεού και της πατρίδας (B 139.18).

66. It does not occur in Book 1 at all. Of the eight occurrences in the *Memoirs* five are qualifying *patrida*.

67. Other epithets qualifying *patrida* in the *Visions* are: φτωχή and σκληρωμένη.

68. S. Asdrachas, Μακρυγιάννη Άπομνημονεύματα, 533. The *Visions* are literally an unfinished work, unless we assume that further leaves of the manuscript have been lost. See V. Sfyroeras, in S.P. Panagopoulos and others, Κείμενα, 18, and G.P. Savvidis, *ibid.*, 21.

ironically of self-interested so-called patriots: [η πατρίδα] θα χαθεί κατά τον πατριωτισμόν οπού δείχεται εις τους αγωνιστάς και εις τους τίμιους ανθρώπους (A153.9-10), Ypsilantis is made to say to Odysseas when the latter has been forced to resign as Archistratigos by the *Areios Pagos*. In a later comment on those who died in the battles of Derven Fourka and Alamana, Makriyannis writes: Και ήταν τυχεροί οπού πέθαναν ενδόξως και γλύτωσαν από τον πατριωτισμόν του Κωλέτη, του Μαυροκορδάτου, του Μεταξά κι αλλουνών τέτοιων πατριώτων (A161, footnote). Such ironic usages of *patriotismos* and *patriotis* are frequent and in fact increase as the book progresses chronologically. Ωρίστε πατριωτισμόν από πατριώτες!, exclaims Makriyannis of an article in the press which attacks him for taking a cautious line on the prosecution of the *Megali Idea* (B173.2).<sup>69</sup>

*Patriotismos* is, then, a double-edged word: as an ideal it goes hand in hand with αρετή, sincerity, bravery, truth, love of honour and the other qualities which true patriots possess.<sup>70</sup> But often those who profess patriotism use it as a cover for self-interest. Makriyannis's irony seeks out the double standards, always, of course, according to his own perception of the individuals concerned.

Both *patriotismos* and *patriotis*, it may be noted, are borrowings from the French, hurrah-words of the Revolution, along with many other such republican terms. As such, their arrival in Greek is unlikely to antedate the 1790s by very much. The earliest known occurrences of *patriotismos* are found in two texts of Rigas which date from 1797.<sup>71</sup> In his Θούριος we read:

Ἐλάτε μ' ἕναν ζῆλον σέ τοῦτον τόν καιρόν,  
νά κάμωμεν τόν ὄρκον ἐπάνω στόν Σταυρόν·

69. It is interesting to note that *patriotis*, used ironically, is almost always accompanied by the adjective καλός, or some other positive attribute: γενναίος, αγαθός, τίμιος, καθαρός; frequently two of these adjectives are coupled together.

70. αρετή και πατριωτισμός is a common doublet in the *Memoirs*, occurring some 13 times; in four further instances a third quality is added: αντρεία, ηθική, φρονιμάδα, αλήθεια. The doublet is also found three times in the *Visions*, and one more time with the addition of ηθική.

71. S.A. Koumanoudis, *Συναγωγή Νέων Λέξεων υπό τῶν Λογίων πλασθεισῶν ἀπό τῆς Ἀλώσεως μέχρι τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς χρόνων*. Προλεγόμενα Κ.Θ. Δημαρᾶ (Athens 1980) [Νεοελληνικά Μελετήματα 4] 787, gives Rigas Velestinlis as the first user of the word.

συμβούλους προκομμένους, μέ πατριωτισμόν,  
νά βάλωμεν, εις ὅλα νά δίδουν ὄρισμόν.<sup>72</sup>

One of the questions in Rigas's *Κατήχηση Δημοκρατική* reads as follows: Τίς ἡ τῆς Πατρίδος ἀγάπη, ἡγουν ὁ Πατριωτισμός;<sup>73</sup> The phraseology suggests that Rigas is here deliberately introducing a new word into the language. It perhaps took some time to establish itself completely. The Ἑλληνική Νομαρχία of 1806 does not use the word *patriotismos*, but instead the phrases ἀγάπη τῆς πατρίδος and ἔρωσ τῆς πατρίδος, which render the French *amour de la patrie*.<sup>74</sup> Certainly by the outbreak of the War of Independence, and probably somewhat earlier, *patriotismos* was in widespread use in the press and in political writings of every kind, no longer viewed as a neologism or a foreign import.<sup>75</sup>

The French word *patriotisme* is in turn a borrowing from English, its first occurrence dating from 1749.<sup>76</sup> In English *patriotism* had acquired a pejorative sense through its associations with Bolingbroke's Country Party — and this sense is common in polemical literature of the 1730s and 1740s — we may recall Dr Johnson's definition of patriotism as "the last refuge of a scoundrel". So Makriyannis's use of the word to indicate his disapproval of his political enemies may be viewed as a case of semantic history repeating itself.

The foregoing analysis indicates, in a necessarily selective and somewhat summary way, Makriyannis's use of words indicating ethnic identity and patriotism.<sup>77</sup> As so often with attempts to analyse quantitatively material that is already familiar, the results

72. L. Vranousis (ed.), *Ρήγας Βελεστινλής-Φεραίος*. Συναγωγή κειμένων, φιλολογική ἐπεξεργασία καὶ παρουσίαση Λ. Βρανούσης, 2 vols. (Athens 1968), II 728, lines 21-4.

73. *Ibid.*, II 758.

74. Similarly the author of the Ἑλληνική Νομαρχία writes φιλόπατρις, not πατριώτης. But he does use the adjective πατριωτικός, to qualify nouns such as χρέος, ἀγάπη, ἐνθουσιασμός. A useful critical bibliography on this work is: M. Mandouvalou, 'Ἑλληνική Νομαρχία', *Μαντατοφόρος* 13 (1979) 12-25.

75. Some typical examples from the newspaper Ἑλληνικά Χρονικά will be found in A. Koumariou, 'Ὁ Τύπος στὸν Ἀγώνα', II 24, 30, 75. The same newspaper carried an article on the meaning of *patrida* and *patriotismos* in its issue of 11-15 April 1825 (*ibid.* pp. 236-9).

76. D. Fletcher, 'The emergence of *patriotisme*', *Semasia* 4 (1977) 5.

77. Space has precluded an examination of the word ἔθνος itself, which Makriyannis uses 72 times in the *Memoirs*. It is, perhaps, for Makriyannis, not so sharply defined

tend to confirm pre-existing impressions and accepted ideas. It was not necessary to show that Makritannis is preoccupied with a patriotic ideal throughout his *Memoirs*. We may be surprised to discover the extent to which the theme dominates the whole work, is used as a yardstick against which the protagonists' actions may be measured, and even, perhaps, surpasses religion as a motivating force in Markiyannis's thinking. In the case of the *Visions* — a work which, in a sense, had a bad press even before it was published<sup>78</sup> — it is rather more surprising to note the recurrence of the same themes and the extent of their frequency. It was not the aim of this study to analyse the two works with a view to uncovering stages in the development of Makriyannis's ideology. However, it may be concluded that there is a progression — or perhaps better a degeneration — in the *Memoirs* in the way his patriotic ideals are formulated: a gradual increase in emphasis on the sufferings of the fatherland, an increase in irony and sarcasm, and a growing insistence on the linking of fatherland with religion. The Constitutional Uprising of 1843 marks a significant change in Makriyannis's outlook. The *Visions* continue a trend which was already apparent in the last two books of the *Memoirs*, as his isolation in society increases and he turns more and more in on himself. But the relationship of the two texts needs to be explored much more fully.

There is one aspect of Makriyannis's style which does not change significantly in the two works and that is his fondness for linking together two words of related meaning which function virtually as a hendiadys: πατρίδα και θρησκεία, πατριωτισμός και αρετή, γενναίως και πατριωτικώς,

a concept as *patrida* or *thriskeia*, but he does give some definitions: Χωρίς αρετή και πόνο εις την πατρίδα και πίστη εις την θρησκεία τους έθνη δεν υπάρχουν (A 103.11-12); Η πατρίδα του κάθε ανθρώπου και η θρησκεία είναι το παν και πρέπει να θυσιάζει και πατριωτισμόν και να ζει αυτός και οι συγγενείς του ως τίμιοι άνθρωποι εις την κοινωνία. Και τότε λέγονται έθνη . . . (A 107.10-13). He insists on the need for good administration and the rule of law (A 219.6-7), and often stresses the necessity for Greece, even after Independence, to *become* a nation, "like the other nations". The pre-requisites are the primary virtues of religion and patriotism, but also good leaders, sound laws and a unified society.

78. Vlachoyannis is reported to have described it as "the work of a madman" (έργο ενός τρελοῦ); see L. Politis in *Visions*, 14-15. More balanced views will be found in S.P. Panagopoulos and others, *Κείμενα*. See also K. Georgousopoulos, 'Ο "Άλλος" Μακρυγιάννης και ο "Ένας" Μακρυγιάννης', *Το Βήμα* (20 May 1984).

πατριωτικά και φρόνιμα, γενναίος και τίμιος, and many more. The pairs may sometimes be extended with further related ideas, but such dyadic phrases are so frequent that they may be considered a characteristic feature of the writer's style. It is a simple means of stressing the importance of a concept, and Makriyannis does this particularly with concepts that relate to his principal themes: fatherland, patriotism, honour, bravery. Again, we have noted the frequent recurrence of phrases like χάριτες χρωστάγει η πατρίς and η πατρίδα κιντυνεύει, both admitting of variation of tense, word order and morphology. Such phrases have a formulaic quality perhaps reminiscent of folk narrative — the same explanation might be offered for the use of pairs linked with "and". However, the repeated phrases, like the word pairs, also serve to highlight the author's main theme of fatherland. They are thus motifs introduced into the narrative at appropriate points to convey a message. Repetition and variation are the means which the author uses to tease out of the complex story he has to tell the essential truths he desperately wants his compatriots to accept.

Makriyannis's political vocabulary is inevitably that of his time. Speeches, harangues, newspapers, letters, reports, proclamations<sup>79</sup> and conversations all played a part in shaping his political vocabulary and his ideology. From all these influences, some assimilated, some rejected, he succeeded in creating his own individual forms of expression — his style. Surprisingly, he shows himself capable of considerable literary sophistication, as for example his precise use of the word *Romios*, his verbal

79. Such influences, of course, account for Makriyannis's occasional use of learned linguistic forms and vocabulary, which have been analysed in detail by M. Stroungari (see above, note 22). The extent to which he, consciously or unconsciously, admitted this influence in the vocabulary examined here may be gauged — somewhat impressionistically — from his choice of alternative nominative and genitive forms of the noun πατρίς, as shown below:

	Learned forms		Demotic forms		Totals
Memoirs:	N πατρίς	56	N πατρίδα	70	126
	G πατρίδος	116	G πατρίδας	45	161
Visions:	N πατρίς	7	N πατρίδα	9	16
	G πατρίδος	36	G πατρίδας	2	38
Totals:		215 (63%)		126 (37%)	341

(For the *Memoirs*, the figures given by Stroungari, 'Ο λογιωτατισμός', 148, are revised in the light of the tables provided by Kyriazidis and Kazazis, *Το Λεξιλόγιο*.)

humour<sup>80</sup> and his trenchant irony. An examination of his political vocabulary cannot but involve a consideration of the stylistic and linguistic means he uses to express his views and ideals. His style can be appreciated most clearly when he is writing about patriotic ideals, because he is here expressing his most heartfelt convictions, about the relationship between the state and the individual and, particularly, about his own self-imposed reforming mission (we may recall his oft-quoted characterisation of himself as πατριδοφύλαξ). It is this congruity between form and meaning, remarked by Seferis more than forty years ago, that makes Makriyannis so worthy of study. His political judgements may often be naive, prejudiced and inconsistent, but they cannot be dismissed as unimportant. Alongside their enduring literary qualities, the *Memoirs* — and now the *Visions* too — still have much to teach us about the linguistic, political and ideological history of the Greek people.<sup>81</sup>

80. A few examples are given by G. Michailidis, "Ο Μακρυγιάννης και ο Νεοελληνικός Μύθος", 439.

81. Since this article was completed, the periodical Διαβάζω has published a special issue devoted to Makriyannis. Among many interesting contributions, of particular relevance to the present subject is that of K. Simopoulos, 'Η ιδεολογία του Μακρυγιάννη', Διαβάζω 101 (5 September 1984) 50-3.

## The Politics of Criticism: Deconstruction, Kazantzakis, 'Literature'

GREGORY JUSDANIS

*The Life and Manners of Alexis Zorbas* is Kazantzakis' most popular and successful novel: in Greece it has been reprinted repeatedly, while abroad it has been the subject of many translations, having been adapted also for the stage and screen. In Europe and North America *Alexis Zorbas* perhaps ranks as the most widely read Greek novel and is widely perceived as the literary work which best represents the essence of Greece. A number of studies have been devoted to it in Greece and overseas, a fact which also attests to the novel's strong appeal.

Most critics read the novel in biographical terms, that is, they see the narrator as Kazantzakis, and Zorba as the real peasant the author met in Macedonia. They account for the novel's popularity by pointing to the legend of Zorba that Kazantzakis created, of the man who had a tremendous zest for life and who moved relentlessly towards the radiant path of freedom. Zorba and the entire novel come to be understood as a mythopoiesis of the life force and a parable of its immediate fulfillment on earth. The novel is thus an affirmation of life and the *élan vital*. It celebrates life's struggle against inertia and decay.

But this theme of 'life' represents only one element in a series of dichotomies upon which the work is structured. As I will argue later, the novel is composed of many oppositions, the most important being life/living:art/writing. What critics have done is to privilege the first part of the dichotomy and to ignore the latter. By emphasising the novel's eulogy of the living spirit they have repressed its textual aspect. Kazantzakis' interpreters have

foregrounded the living voice over the dead letter, but have failed to observe that the novel is first, and perhaps primarily, a matter of writing.

It is to the concept of writing in *Alexis Zorbas* that I turn in the first part of this paper. The fullest, most comprehensive discussion of writing that we have to date is that provided by Jacques Derrida. This celebrated French philosopher has dealt extensively with this notion having examined it in a series of philosophical, literary, anthropological, and psychoanalytical texts. His work has been influential in the field of literary studies inasmuch as it has been used widely during the past decade in the revaluation of literary texts. Indeed, deconstruction has been proposed as a way out from the crisis facing literary studies. In this article I will examine *Alexis Zorbas* in the light of Derrida's ideas on writing. My aim is to use this novel as a pre-text, as a test case for the potential application of deconstruction in Modern Greek. My other purpose is to examine the ideological implications of deconstruction and its relationship to the established schools of criticism. Generally I wish to explore the position of criticism in society. I will end with a set of proposals for a contentious and politically aware Greek criticism.

# I

As I stated above, writing is a notion basic to Derrida's thought, and like his other concepts<sup>1</sup> it is problematical, not lending itself easily to analysis. The difficulties with this term arise from the fact that it has at least two potential meanings. It can signify the empirical notion of writing as phonetic script, or it can denote writing in an extended sense as the supplementary and undecidable aspect of language and communication.

I will turn first to the traditional notion of writing which, according to Derrida, has been repressed in the West. In *Of Grammatology*, for instance, Derrida cites passages from, amongst others, Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Hegel, Saussure, and Lévi-Strauss in which writing is condemned as a debased form

1. I use the word 'concept' here in a qualified sense, that is under erasure. As Derrida argues, terms such as *écriture*, *supplément*, and *différance* are not concepts strictly speaking since they are contradictory and imply the negation of the 'concept'.

of speech. These thinkers denounce the evils of writing because, being allegedly a representation of speech, it is a fallen and inauthentic mode of communication. Thus it betrays life. It menaces the breath, the spirit and history, and signifies their end or paralysis. (1977: 25) "Writing", Derrida claims, "the letter, the sensible inscription, has always been considered by Western tradition as the body and matter external to the spirit, to breath, to speech and to the logos". (35) The violence, the exteriority of writing is thought to befall the innocence of language, undermining its plenitude and immediacy. Writing is feared as a potentially destructive and dispossessing act, hence its repression in the West and the valorization of speech.

This bias in the philosophical tradition of the West which privileges the 'living voice' over the 'dead' script is called by Derrida phonocentrism. In this tendency the voice becomes a metaphor of truth and authenticity which highlights the priority of speech in an act of communication. Phonocentrism fosters transparent understanding by promoting the impression of a direct link between signifier and signified. When one speaks, Derrida explains, one is conscious not only of being present but also of keeping as close as possible to one's thought, a signifier that seems to depend on one's spontaneity and which requires no external instrument. "Not only do the signifier and the signified seem to unite, but also, in this confusion, the signifier seems . . . to become transparent, in order to allow the concept to present itself as what it is, referring to nothing other than its presence". (1981: 22).

This experience which involves the reduction of the signifier's exteriority is a lure; and such a lure, Derrida argues, has organized an entire epoch whose concepts and presuppositions are discernible from Plato to the present. By this Derrida means that phonocentrism is a symptom of a broader metaphysical tendency, that of logocentrism — the belief in some ultimate idea or essence such as Reason, Being, Spirit, God, which gives meaning to our reality and thought. Phonocentrism and logocentrism relate to the human desire to anchor existence upon a transcendental presence.

Writing disrupts the phonocentric process in signification. It undermines the idea of self-present communication based on the 'living' voice; it is an act of mediation and a departure of logos from itself. "Writing is the dissimulation of the natural, primary

and immediate presence of sense to the soul within the logos". (1977: 37) As such, it constantly threatens to enervate the entire organism which thrives on the logos. For this reason it is feared, condemned and rejected.

Implicit in this repudiation of writing in the narrow sense is the repression of the much more fundamental notion of arché-writing. As Spivak notes in her introduction to *Of Grammatology*, the usual notion of writing contains elements similar to those found in arché-writing: the absence of author and of subject matter, empty spaces, meaningless punctuation marks and interpretability. We acknowledge these properties in writing and repress it, and this permits us to "ignore that everything else is also inhabited by the structure of writing in general". (Derrida 1977: XIX) In other words, the reduction of writing reveals the exclusion of writing in the extended sense.

Arché writing is inseparable from writing but somehow distinct from it, hence its meaning is difficult to arrest. Generally it comes to represent the undecidability of communication, and the practice of differentiation, articulation and spacing. (Norris 1982: 28, Leitch 1983: 26) In the context of Derridean thought, arché-writing signifies the primary process that produces language. It is the originary act of differentiation which precedes the spoken word and inaugurates language. It is in this respect, according to Derrida, that "there is no linguistic sign before writing", or that "[b]efore being noted or not being or figured the linguistic sign implies an originary writing". (14, 55, 52) This originary act involves the process of supplementarity, the differentiation of one signifier from another; it implies the trace that the former imprints on the latter and the absence of that signifier.

Arché-writing as it is associated with *différance*,<sup>2</sup> trace, pharmakon, supplement and so on, works to displace meaning beyond the stable concept, transcendental signifier, and homogeneous sign. It hinders and delays all access to a unique content. Writing is governed by a potential difference which guarantees its infinite and ineluctable divisibility. Derrida sums up this extended use of writing as follows:

2. As Derrida puts it: "From here I shall constantly reconfirm that writing is the other name of this difference". (1977: 268) Discussion of the other non-concepts extends beyond the scope of this paper. For an analysis of these terms see: Derrida 1981a: 43; Leitch: 25-28, 41, 170-75; Norris: 32, 46-8, 123.

Arché writing, at first the possibility of the spoken word, then of the 'graphie' in the narrow sense, the birthplace of 'usurpation', denounced from Plato to Saussure, this trace is the opening of the first exteriority in general, the enigmatic relationship of the living to its other and of an inside to an outside: spacing. (70)

It is in this space that the word emerges, the space which threatens speech and logos and which is repressed in the West.

At this point one may object to Derrida's argument. By assigning an originary function to writing is he not conferring priority to it thereby reversing the former imbalance? Derrida denies this, claiming that even speech is structured as writing, that is, as *différance*. (1977: 56, 1981: 12) He insists that through *différance* — fashioned from the verbs 'to differ' and 'to defer' — the opposition of speech/writing is overcome. Arché writing is another name for *différance*<sup>3</sup> — the perennial alterity of language, its spaces and *aporias*, its subconscious, that which evades full meaning.

## II

It is the element of potential undecidability that according to Derrida the West effaces. Here I wish to turn to *Alexis Zorbas* and examine the extent to which writing is repressed in a realist modern Greek text. Superficially this sort of novel does not seem to lend itself to such an analysis, but as the discussion will show, *Alexis Zorbas* is set in the context of writing. It is preoccupied with the problems of writing which Derrida has identified in the western tradition. The conflict between speech and writing is central to the novel and serves as one of the antitheses present in the work.

Structurally, as stated in the introduction, the novel is based on a series of oppositions paradigmatically articulated by the two antagonistic characters, the narrator/writer and Zorba. In a sense the two protagonists come to represent a succession of

3. "If I persist in calling that difference writing, it is because, within the work of historical repression, writing was by its situation, destined to signify the most radical difference. It threatened the desire for living speech from the closest proximity". (Derrida 1977: 56) I will return to this point later, for it is far from conclusive that writing has been universally repressed in the West. Yet Derrida's extended use of writing depends on this allegedly uniform repression.



dichotomies: theory (art)/action, death/life, inauthenticity/authenticity, absence/presence, knowledge/innocence, unhappiness/happiness, and of course writing/speech. But these oppositions are by no means introduced neutrally, for a strong bias is directed towards the second element of each pair, which appears more pure, more real and more true. The guilt-ridden narrator, for instance, regards Zorba as the authentic man of action who can deliver him from his unnatural life of learning and writing: "He had what ■ pen-pusher needs to save himself".<sup>4</sup> (Kazantzakis: 7)

From the onset, writing comes to represent a fall from the source, it is portrayed as an irrevocably reductive act which transforms vibrant life into dead script: "It was too late already. And thus Zorba, instead of becoming a lofty and imperative model of life, was reduced and became, alas, a literary theme with which to smudge a few sheets of paper". (8) The wording in this passage is noticeably prejudiced against writing which is accused of impoverishing life. Its value is further put into question by the narrator's characterization of art as a grievous (*thliverio*) privilege that often becomes ruinous (*olethrio*). Allegedly it destroys him and all that it deals with.

Writing, literature, learning are mistrusted, they are seen as invidious acts or forces which debase life, including that of the narrator:

If I had listened to his voice — no, not his voice, his cry — my life would have gained in value; I would have lived with blood and skin and bones that which I now, like a hashish-addict, reflect and act with paper and pen. (10)

Writing devalues life and robs it of its vital substances. The narrator considers his life to be lost and he fears that after the completion of the novel Zorba's animated spirit would be transformed to graphemes on paper:

And thus Zorba, who was full of flesh and bones, was reduced in my hands to ink and paper. Without wanting it, and in fact wishing the opposite, the myth of Zorba began for some time to crystallize within me.<sup>5</sup> (9)

4. All translations from the Greek are mine and are meant to be as literal as possible.

5. The problem with these and former passages relates to the manner by which writing/literature reduces life. How does this process operate? Is there a pure state called life that somehow is debased by the external medium of writing? These ques-

The writer has little faith in literature, he is reluctant to "commit a life to writing" and thus extinguish its living force through the dead script. In a sense writing is implicated with death, for the narrator begins to work on the manuscript at the point when Zorba dies.

The treatment to which writing is subjected in the prologue is evident throughout the novel. Indeed, the contrast between speech and writing becomes more pronounced as additional antitheses are accumulated, such as theory (art)/action. For instance, when the narrator refuses to follow his friend in a mission to save the Greeks in the Caucasus, his friend rebukes him for his lack of involvement and his inability to act. "You will eat paper, you will smear yourself with ink". (17) The narrator agrees and asks himself how he, who once loved life, could now permit himself "to get involved so long with paper and ink". (21) Yet, despite the friend's appeals he refuses to commit himself to the deed and remains *anergos*. However, his withdrawal from the act comes with a price, for the romantic split between thought and action results in guilt, and the narrator is no exception. He suffers as if he committed ■ serious offence, as if he ■ had sinned. His guilty feelings intensify when he meets Zorba! "I was ashamed of my unworked hands" he confesses to himself, as he listens to Zorba's stories of his past adventures.

The narrator claims that Zorba appeared as a saviour to him, yet from another perspective Zorba's presence serves only to humiliate him and exacerbate his sense of alienation. For the narrator, as for the reader, Zorba comes to represent the state of overflowing and fulfilling life, that which he longs for but can never attain. In every possible characteristic he is what the narrator is not, he is an image of the narrator's Other. He did not go to school, hence his mind was not corrupted. (85) He had discovered *aletheia*, and the proper way. (99) He possessed an instinct to exist symbiotically with nature's divine rhythm: "I had never seen such a friendly correspondence between man and

tions serve to emphasize the difficulties inherent in the notion of mimesis, for what is primarily at issue in the composition of the novel? Is the narrator/writer trying to copy, represent, refer to, reflect Zorba's life, or is he following the literary conventions as prescribed by the tradition of novel writing in Greece and in Europe?

nature". (166) The narrator, on the other hand, as a writer and as a product of culture has severed his link with the origin. He is external to the primary, to the natural and to the immediate. Thus he desires a reunification with this undifferentiated and pristine state:

My life was lost, I thought; if I could only take a sponge and wipe out all that I have read, that I have seen and heard, to enter Zorba's school, and to begin the great, the true alphabet. (99)

The use of the word 'alphabet' here is instructive since it sets the passage in the context of speech and writing. The authentic alphabet differs from the narrator's script in that it represents the transcendental law of nature. Writing transgresses this *nomos* through its violence; it shatters the primordial unity allowing spaces to emerge and division to begin. Writing is condemned because it usurps the *nomos*. As the narrator warns: "It is a deadly sin to violate the eternal laws; it is your duty to abide by the immortal rhythm with trust". (153) For the narrator/writer, the timeless rhythm is interrupted by the letter, by knowledge and by books. His world is essentially textualised. Indeed he confesses to himself that if given a choice between falling in love and reading a book about love, he would opt for the latter. (129)

Yet the book is empty, it cannot compensate for the absence of experience, it contains meaningless signs. At least this is the way the narrator characterizes the poetry of Mallarmé, as he confronts what Barthes calls this poet's 'typographical agraphia' (1968: 75):

All these appeared to me for the first time today without blood, without smell and human substance: blue, faded, empty words in the wind. Distilled, crystal-clear water, without bacteria but also without nourishing substances; without life. (167).

The writing of Mallarmé has been drained of life's vital juices; true being has been replaced by pure poetry. The narrator sees this formalism as the product of an exhausted civilization where everything is converted to writing and ultimately to form:

All things have been reduced to words, all words to musical amusements, and now the last man is sitting at the extremity of his solitude and decomposes music into silent mathematical relations. (168).

Perhaps nothing is more distanced from the innocent world of Zorba than the typographically oriented and intricately complex poetry of the European *fin-de-siècle*, a poetry devoid of permanent meaning and condensed to self-referential words. Such a notion of writing and literature is regarded as corrupt(ing), and is effaced and devalued throughout the novel.

Yet this attempt to repress writing is never complete and never entirely successful, for the opacity of writing re-emerges in the text's edges and fissures. Paradoxically, the rejection of writing is dependent on writing itself. But apart from this obvious fact, the novel itself constitutes a scene of writing containing many tissues of texts, each one grafted onto the other and framed by other writing.

The prologue, for instance, written in italics and hence separated from the rest of the text, presents the moment of the actual writing of the novel which is supposed to deal with the life of Zorba. It situates us in the immediate context of writing; ironically, it informs us that what is about to follow is less a life and more a narration, a contrived piece of writing and not a spontaneous overflow of feeling. In addition, throughout the novel there are many references to its composition, references which interrupt the illusion of life and highlight the act of writing. Often the narrator reminds the reader that he is about to translate or incorporate within the main text letters that he had received in the past. (178, 365) He also makes countless allusions to his attempts to complete another manuscript, that on Buddha.

In this respect, writing is not described in hostile terms since it is regarded as a productive practice; it liberates. In the following passage the 'word' (*lexi*), whose powers were previously feared, takes now a positive meaning: "I was writing and with every sentence I was relieved, I grew stronger, I sensed that Temptation was fleeing, pursued by that all-powerful magic spell, the word". Writing in this instance equals redemption from Buddhist nihilism. But writing saves in another, more traditional way; it rescues and preserves experience from oblivion. The narrator's ostensible motive in composing the novel was to record and commemorate a life, to collect all the traces and memories of Zorba and "to express them with words". (364) Writing here for the narrator does not betray life but immortalizes it.

These and other strategies set the text within the literary context; the novel is permeated by layers of textuality framed by the prologue and conclusion, both of which deal directly with its composition. The various references to writing serve to emphasize the textual aspect of the novel, and to disrupt the illusion of mimesis. From this perspective, the position of writing is valorized, as it returns to affirm its existence. Thus it is possible to conclude that writing is not completely repressed in the novel; indeed, as Derrida would argue, such an effacement can not succeed. Yet, on the whole the novel attempts to achieve this by incorporating a succession of oppositions and favouring only one side of each pair — the true, the living, and the immediate. Forgetting that it is a written text, it promises to open itself to experience, to copy it, to save it, and in so doing it privileges this 'living' experience at the expense of writing.

According to the Derridean viewpoint this repression of writing in *Alexis Zorbas* represents part of a broader metaphysical tendency in the west. However one can argue that Derrida over-generalizes his observation inasmuch as he considers this phenomenon to be a universal feature of western tradition. He seems to view a period of three thousand years as a unified, continuous development, and one without differences. But one can argue that western thought is much more differentiated than Derrida appears to allow. In fact it is possible to speak of many traditions and differences within one tradition. In the case of *Alexis Zorbas*, the repression of writing can be explained with reference to its own genre, the realist novel which emerged in Europe during the middle of nineteenth century. The realist novel attempted to depict reality as faithfully as possible through the transparent medium of language. Indeed, transparent communication and unproblematical writing are two of the fundamental strategies of realist fiction. As such, Kazantzakis' devaluation of writing in *Alexis Zorba* is in accordance with the conventions of realist literature.

This historical perspective, which examines the specificity of a genre and situates it in a field of a set of conventions, allows us to locate the repression of writing in the context of a particular tradition. Such an approach which analyses time- and culture-specific traditions would put into doubt the universal validity of Derrida's observations. Recently, critics have questioned the

sweeping nature of Derrida's generalizations, as much as they have questioned the empirical evidence supporting Derrida's position on the West's repression of writing, a historical repression upon which his extended notion of writing is heavily dependent.

### III

One such critic is Walter Ong, who in his *Orality and Literacy* explores from another perspective the conflict between oral and written communication.<sup>6</sup> One of Ong's main theses is that written texts have enjoyed enormous prestige in our tradition, sometimes at the expense of their oral counterparts. While Derrida argues that logocentrism has suppressed all free reflection on the origin and status of writing and that an analysis of writing without regard to sound has never been attempted, Ong believes it is orality which has been repressed; he claims that the scientific study of language has ignored this field of inquiry for centuries. (Derrida 1977: 45, 59; Ong: 8) According to Ong, textuality has had such a relentless dominance in western thought that oral works "tended to be regarded generally as variants of written productions or, if not this, as beneath serious scholarly attention".<sup>7</sup> (8) Here Ong inverts the deconstructive arguments with his assertion that scholars have debased oral productions by considering them a secondary form of writing.<sup>8</sup>

6. Ong relies heavily on the work of Marshall McLuhan, the Canadian thinker whose books on writing, print and the mass media were very influential a number of years ago. Presently his work is largely ignored by those dealing with the topic of writing. Yet his views challenge Derrida's position in that he argues that western culture is dominated by writing and print. In *The Gutenberg Galaxy* McLuhan plots the development of the West from the initial stage of orality, through the periods of writing and print, and finally to the era of electromagnetic communication. He analyzes the "divergent nature of oral and written social organization", and examines the effects that inventions, such as the alphabet and print, had on forms of thought and organization of experience. (1) McLuhan's ideas are often held as eccentric — hence his ambiguous position in the academy — yet what remains undeniable is his convincing account of first, the chirographic, and second, the typographic nature of western culture.

7. This is exactly the treatment to which Greek oral songs were subjected by purist scholars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Not considering the demotic productions as proper objects of study, the purists rejected them in favour of the learned and literate poetry in *katharevousa*. From this point of view presented in this essay, what is the debate between Demoticism and Purism but a manifestation of the conflict between orality and literacy, speech and writing.

8. As will be remembered, deconstruction argues that tradition has repressed writing by conceiving it as a representation of speech.

Ong acknowledges that a conflict exists in western culture between orality and literacy but sees this relationship as very complex, with each element being privileged at various stages of tradition. For instance, Ong regards Plato's position on writing as ambiguous. Although Plato rejects writing in the *Phaedrus* and the *Seventh Letter* as a mechanical and potentially dangerous activity, his philosophical system depends on writing. (24) Plato seems to have mistrusted the written word yet, Ong points out, paradoxically his entire epistemology represses oral culture. He cites Havelock (*Preface to Plato*), who argues that implicit in Plato's banishment of poetry is his rejection of the aggregative and paratactic style of oral thought. (Ong: 27-8)

Ong disputes Derrida's interpretation of Plato as it relates to phonocentrism and logocentrism. Plato's position, he claims, is much more complicated than Derrida seems to allow. Ong also expresses his doubt about Derrida's connection of logocentrism and phonocentrism. Logocentrism, which Ong regards as a gross realism — a one-to-one relationship between reality and language — is not fostered by phonocentrism, but is rather encouraged by textuality; it is further reinforced by print and the notion of the sign which is a text based concept. According to Ong, a major shortcoming of deconstruction is that it has failed to account for the historical origins of logocentrism, that is, it has not examined the development from the oral world of imitation to the print world of dissemination. (168) This lack of a historical awareness leads to such omissions and to the confusion between print and writing. Derrida, Ong insists, is tied down more to typography than to writing.<sup>9</sup> (129)

It is this obtrusive ahistoricity in Derridean thought that Michel Foucault also foregrounds in his criticism of deconstruc-

9. Ong introduces a number of interesting points concerning writing and print which can be summarized here briefly. Ironically, he says, many of the concepts in literature and linguistics, which modern theory puts into question, are a result of writing and print. The notion of an autonomous discourse, permanently detached from the author, is encouraged by writing and fostered by the effects of closure created by print. (161) Print culture believes in privately uttered and owned words, which are to be protected from imitation. Oral culture, on the other hand, knows few or no anxieties of influence. Such 'radical' concepts as intertextuality were taken for granted in manuscript culture which deliberately produced texts from other texts. (133) Deconstruction claims to speak about the whole of western tradition, yet it specializes mainly on texts with a marked typographic perspective, and which were produced since romanticism. (164)

tion, for, far from agreeing with Derrida that western tradition has privileged speech over writing, Foucault proves the opposite, that is, at least since the Renaissance and certainly since the eighteenth century writing has been valorized over speech. Obviously Foucault conceives textuality in a manner radically different from Derrida. The object of Foucault's analysis is not the internal constitution of a hermetically sealed text but writing as discourse, as a practice we impose on things. The alleged free play of writing is limited and circumscribed by historically determined rules and procedures. Discourse is governed by certain paradigms and systems of exclusion which determine what can be said by whom and where. One of the principle mechanisms of exclusion in the West is the will-to-truth, or will-to-knowledge. (Foucault 1972: 219) According to Said this idea is perhaps Foucault's greatest contribution to contemporary thought in that he has shown that "our will to exercise dominant control in society and history has also discovered to clothe, disguise, rarify and wrap itself systematically in the language of truth, discipline, rationality, utilitarian values and knowledge". (705) Each discourse seeks out knowledge for its own ends in order to consolidate itself and maintain authority over its own subject(s): yet it masks this procedure with the illusion that it operates in the name of truth or pure knowledge. (I will return to this aspect of discourse later in my discussion of the political nature of criticism).

Around the end of the eighteenth century discourse disappeared, that is, it hid its rules of formation and concealed its association with power. (Foucault 1973: 304) Discourse no longer ensured the representation of things. Language dispersed and reappeared as writing that seemed to designate nothing other than itself. (304) Thus there has been an ever increasing accumulation of writing and knowledge which appears to be harmless, but is in fact becoming more effective in the disciplinary control of society. As mentioned earlier, one of the most effective means by which discourse concealed its operations was by conferring the status of truth to its statements.<sup>10</sup>

10. It is the presence of the will-to-truth that Foucault identifies in the *Phaedrus*. The critique of writing is secondary to the much more fundamental theme which deals with the question of truth. "It does not matter whether a text is written or oral — the question is whether or not the discourse in question gives access to truth". (1983: 246)

In the name of scientific truth, for instance, individuals were detained in asylums or prisons where their every action was observed and their behavioural patterns recorded. Through the use of force people were rendered objects of knowledge. A whole set of scientific statements arose, from such inquiries, whose new knowledge about men and women was then applied to the general population for its effective control. What appeared as benign, if not disinterested, observation of individuals in the prison, hospital and school led to the new discourse, the sciences of man, whose statements of truth manifested themselves as neutral and objective writing.

It is from the perspective of this development that Foucault disagrees with Derrida's thesis that the West has consistently valorized speech over writing. He has demonstrated that our culture has been preoccupied for some time with the production of discourse, which appears, however, as harmless writing. Foucault also addresses himself to Derrida's extended notion of writing. The first instance occurs in his essay, "What is an Author?", where Foucault argues that this concept merely transposes the empirical characteristics of the author to a transcendental anonymity. In granting to writing a primordial status, Foucault asks, do we not re-inscribe in transcendental terms the theological affirmation of its scared origin? In his criticism Foucault underscores the theological presuppositions informing writing which, as we remember, is an ineffable concept existing beyond total human comprehension. To claim that writing has been subject to repression is to reintroduce, first the religious principle of hidden meanings, which requires interpretation, and second the notion of implicit and obscure significations which give rise to commentary. (1977: 120) (I will discuss the religious aspect of deconstruction, especially with regard to its conception of the text, later in this paper).

Foucault returns to the notion of *écriture* (writing) and to the general implications of deconstruction in "My Body, this Paper, this Fire", where he responds to Derrida's reading of his *Madness and Civilization*. This article, which deals largely with their dispute over a passage of Descartes, serves to emphasize once more the major differences between their two positions concerning textuality, discourse, and writing. Foucault finds fault with Derrida's almost exclusive concern with the inner properties of

the text since this ignores the text's relationship with its historical context. Derrida, according to Foucault, reduces a discursive practices to textual traces, he textualizes events of discourse treating them as "marks for reading". Foucault ends his paper with a severe denunciation of Derridean deconstruction, accusing it of having given rise to a new pedagogy:

A pedagogy which teaches the pupil that there is nothing outside the text, but that in it, in the gaps, its blanks and its silences there reigns the reserve of the origin; that it is therefore unnecessary to search elsewhere, but that here, not in the words certainly, but in the words under erasure, in their *grid*, the 'sense of being' is said. A pedagogy which gives conversely to the master's voice the limitless sovereignty which allows it to restate the text indefinitely. (1979b: 27)

Many critics subsequently have taken issue with the fury of Foucault's climactic ending. (Said: 702; Spivak in Derrida 1977: IXI-IXII: Riddel: 239) Yet are Foucault's remarks concerning the tendency in deconstruction towards system building so misdirected? Implicit in Foucault's criticism is the question of whether deconstruction, despite its revolutionary rhetoric, succumbs, like the human sciences, to the production of knowledge through disciplinary procedures and regularizing structures which are linked to the exercise of power. Indeed, there are a number of scholars now who express serious reservations about this legacy of deconstruction.

Richard Rorty, for instance, in his paper "Philosophy as a Kind of Writing" states that there is an aspect of Derrida which is lured to the construction of systems. Rorty argues that by bequeathing a discourse to his followers Derrida has come very close to providing us with a philosophy of language and thus may have slipped back to the tradition of ontotheology. The process by which a new philosophical system was produced in the past is as follows: a) One notices that something all-encompassing and unconditioned is being treated as any other limited object of knowledge. b) One argues that it is so unique that it needs a separate discourse to describe it, and proceeds to fashion one. c) One's followers, thinking that a new field of inquiry has been invented, accept the new terminology and begin to use it. (100-101)

If one applies Rorty's observations to deconstruction as it is practiced in the Anglo-Saxon world and exemplified by the Yale



School, it is possible to say that this process has reached its conclusion and deconstruction has become a new methodology. It would appear that, despite Derrida's endeavour to invent anti-concepts which would deal with the ineffable (*écriture*) yet avoid turning into objects of commentary, it is now possible to speak about language if only 'grammatically'. Derrida's special terms have acquired prestige and history and are being used regularly in the analysis of texts. As Said points out, Derrida has accumulated what looks like a method complete with distinct words and concepts. In this respect, "a kind of new orthodoxy has come into existence, no less held in by certain doctrines and ideas than is 'Western metaphysics'." (682)

Both Rorty and Said suggest, though they take great care not to say so outright, that a new methodology has actually emerged.<sup>11</sup> Yet six years later, during which deconstruction has 'disseminated' itself throughout the academy, one could argue that it has developed into a clearly defined discourse whose aim is to isolate a text, and investigate its unstable elements and self-deconstructive capacity. Indeed, deconstruction assigns the qualities of difficulty and undecidability to the text which, in a sense, justifies its inexhaustible activity in interpretation. The critic looks for those figures or tropes that subvert the realist narrative, delay mimesis, and expose the text's inherent nature, its unreadability.<sup>12</sup> Its discursive status, however, as well as its historical position never become objects of analysis.

For Deconstruction the literary text prevails as an awesome and wonderful creation. (Leitch: 95) It commands the critic's respect, and reader's admiration. The text is distanced from the interpreter

11. Sprinkler however states emphatically that Derridean deconstruction has developed into a new idealism with its own ontology of language. (81)

12. Space does not permit a detailed examination of a deconstructive analysis of a literary text. I point briefly to Hillis Miller's article "The Figure in the Carpet" which deals with Henry James' short story of the same title. Miller argues that tropes such as catachresis, which are present in the story, render it unreadable. He finds that the text 'mimes' and 'dramatizes' this unreadability. Indeed, this quality is 'intrinsic' to words, to 'great writers', and to literary language in general. As the argument unfolds, this unreadability begins to function as the story's theme, and Miller, unwittingly, has discovered the text's meaning. For, although Miller, as deconstructor, conceives of unreadability as a signifier, he treats it like a signified. The method followed by Miller can be repeated indefinitely, always though leading to the inevitable result — the text's undecidability, its ultimate and imperative referent.

since it is set in an expanding framework of commentary. By granting to the text an other-worldly aspect, deconstruction idealises it and enshrines its authority. As Sprinkler points out, parallels may be drawn between deconstruction's conception of the text, and the treatment of the Bible in scriptural hermeneutics. (77)<sup>13</sup> Like the Bible, the deconstructive text is a book of books; it is inexpressible, anonymous and inviolable, yet it conceals a divine law which inspires infinite readings.

In this respect deconstruction has almost realised the goal of post-romantic literature, that which, for instance, Mallarmé aspired to write — 'le texte véridique', the veracious text. Mallarmé's ideal was to compose the *Grand Oeuvre*, the absolute work, which would be "architectural" and premeditated", which would exist autonomously, and which, like language, would beget itself. (Mallarmé: 663, 500)<sup>14</sup> He described this text, which was composed of all other texts, as the world's law, its bible. (367) This law was beyond question; for, as Mallarmé wrote, although there were many versions or readings (*leçons*) of it, there was only one true text.

Flaubert had his own designs for an absolute work, but unlike Mallarmé's, which was to subsume all reality, his would be about Nothing. He wanted to write a book "without an external link, which would support itself by the internal force of its style", a book that would hardly have a subject, and which would be almost invisible. (345)<sup>15</sup> Flaubert's book would contain no concepts, it would be composed of imperceptible signifiers held together by their own density.

In order to complete this comparison between the ideal work of Mallarmé and Flaubert and the Derridean text it is worth

13. Vassilis Lambropoulos in his analysis of the rhetoric of guilt as manifested in a variety of literary, religious and critical works touches on the theme of deconstruction's theological presuppositions. (see 'The Sin of the Sign' *Semiotica* (forthcoming 1985) For the biblical and Rabbinic roots of deconstruction and other modern critical discourses see: Susan Handelman: *The Slaying of Moses. The Emergence of Rabbinic Interpretation in Modern Literary Theory* (Albany: State University of New York Press 1982). Douglas Atkins: 'Dehellenizing Literary Criticism' (*College English* 41:7 (March 1980) 769-779)

14. The translations from Mallarmé and Flaubert are my own.

15. Derrida, it seems, has similar designs: "All these texts, which are doubtless the interminable preface to another text that one day I would like to write, or still the epigraph to another that I would never have the audacity to write . . ." (1981a: 5)



quoting here the famous passage with which Derrida begins "Plato's Pharmacy":

A text is not a text unless it hides from the first comer, from the first glance, the law of its composition and rules of its game. A text remains, moreover, forever imperceptible. Its law and its rules are not, however, harboured in the inaccessibility of a secret; it is simply that they can never be booked, in the *present*, into anything that could rigorously be called a perception. (Derrida 1981: 63)

The Derridean text has its own esoteric force, its internal play; like Mallarmé's it contains the law of its own origin, and as Flaubert's it is imperceptible and inaccessible. In the manner of the symbolist poem it conceals, implies and teases but never reveals itself completely. Above all, it is *there*, in its awesome presence to be indefinitely read and interpreted but never exhausted.

#### IV

At this point one wonders whether deconstruction, as it is increasingly practiced in the Anglo-Saxon world, is so radical, or whether it possesses reactionary tendencies. Is it perhaps criticism's version of literary modernism, that movement which overthrew many of art's conventions but never questioned its own historical status, and thus withdrew internally into infinite self-reflexion? In any case, one is sceptical about the revolutionary nature of a discourse which has assimilated itself comfortably in the academy. Such a relatively rapid development would indicate, as Sprinker argues, that broad ideological agreement exists between it and the established schools of criticism, and hence it rests solidly within the liberal bourgeois tradition of the American university. (94) Eagleton would agree: for him much of Anglo-American deconstruction is no more than the return of the old New Critical formalism. (146) In this regard, then, the acrimonious debate between deconstructors and traditional critics, between the Booths and the Hillis Millers, turns out to be sibling rivalry. They are all in the family. After all, masters hand over their authority only to other masters.

Like New Criticism, deconstruction preserves the canon, and resurrects the great author; it simply adds that, instead of one or two, there exist infinite readings. In the manner of its precursor,

deconstruction has ignored the power invested in the text, the power it acquires in society, as it has neglected to examine its own power effects and historical position. Let us not forget, to say that the language of *Alexis Zorbas*, or of "The Figure in the Carpet" is undecidable, is to take a position. It means one is making a statement in 1984, as a man or a woman in the academy, concerning texts which we, for the last two hundred years, have insisted on calling Literature. When one makes these statements, one accepts a certain critical vocabulary and one works within an interpretive community situated in the university, which is itself linked to other institutions such as the publishing house, the foundation, the union, the state and so on.

To ignore this fact and to assume that one is dealing with disinterested truths such as *écriture*, which allegedly have nothing to do with social relations, is to conceal one's association with the system of discursive power and perhaps one's implicit support for it. Yet according to Foucault, this is what the human sciences have done. They produce knowledge, but they have hidden their affiliation with the disciplinary strategies of power, as they have sublimated their struggle for authority. Liberal humanism, for instance, did fight in the past to establish itself as a discourse, and at the present it engages other discourses in order to maintain its dominant position. Yet humanist criticism chooses to ignore the element of power inherent in the production of knowledge, as well as its own cultural specificity. It masks the historical nature of its statements by universalizing them in the name of pure truth. But as I have argued above, all knowledge is very 'interested'. The notions of objectivity and disinterested truth are simply rhetorical ploys by which a discourse grants interpretive authority to its statements, thereby veiling the ideological niche it occupies.

Is it not time for criticism now to examine its own historical position? It can begin by honestly admitting that it is not a disinterested endeavour whose aim is "to know the best that is known through the world and propagate it", but that it *uses* texts (in the name of truth) for particular effects, however masked these may be. It should become conscious of itself as discourse. The recognition of this fact, that is, the recovery of its opaque status, would entail the disappearance of its referent, Literature — ■ notion which has only existed for the last two centuries. This does

not mean that books will be burned but that Literary texts will no longer be privileged as sources of Truth, to which men and women must bow humbly in respect. They will be treated as other texts.

What Rorty says of philosophy holds true for criticism — it is time to change the subject. But this is not a matter of providing a 'new' reading of Kazantzakis, since by itself this reinforces the canon. Criticism is full of attempts to reach Literature's 'deep meaning'. At best, this has led to a regression of infinite interpretations, and at worst, it has concealed criticism's affiliation with the systems of power. By pretending to abandon power in order to discover the Truth of Literature, criticism has tended to consolidate rather than question the truths of society. It has tacitly given support to the dominant ideologies by channelling its energies largely to the preservation of High Culture. Yet only after it conceives itself as a social discourse entangled with other discourses and as an act of power can it learn to employ that power in ways other than the consolidation of the interests of the status quo.

## V

I stated above that the task at hand is not to provide yet another interpretation of Kazantzakis; which brings us back to Kazantzakis, or rather it takes us beyond Kazantzakis-as-Literature. At the beginning I proposed to use *Alexis Zorbas* as a pre-text for the possible application of deconstruction on modern Greek texts. This no doubt provided an interesting and original reading, one that was concerned neither with the intentions of the author nor with his faithful representation of reality. Deconstruction is valuable in that it has offered new strategies and perspectives to textual analysis through the introduction of novel concepts as *écriture*, undecidability, decentredness, *aporia* and so on. In the context of traditional criticism these 'tools' can be used effectively in the dismantling of long cherished aesthetic dogmas. Deconstruction helps liberate the critic from accepted critical practices, but nevertheless it yields only new readings of critical texts. It has not questioned Literature and, above all, Criticism — these institutions have remained intact. Despite its promises of renewal, it has largely developed into a conservative orthodoxy. Now in the eighties it has lost much of its early vigour

and intellectual excitement, having been domesticated into another methodology for the interpretation of literary texts. It has little to offer those who seek a way out of the crisis in literary studies and move beyond Literature and Criticism.

## VI

1) In order that modern Greek criticism see itself as a social discourse, it should first learn about its own past. For this we require surveys of modern Greek criticism which would demonstrate how it emerged in the episteme of the nineteenth century. In other words, they would investigate the epistemological assumptions and ideological circumstances that permitted it to appear as a discipline.<sup>16</sup> Other studies could be devoted to the exploration of what constituted valid critical practice at various historical periods. Such an approach would help determine not only what was acceptable as criticism, but it would delineate what was not acceptable, that is, criticism's Other. We would have to ask ourselves who was permitted to occupy the position of critic and who was not. Only such a perspective could bring into the fore such marginalized writers as Periclis Yiannopoulos and Ion Dragoumis, neither of whom abided by contemporary conventions of critical practice. Related to this would be an examination of the different types of knowledge that were being produced by various critical schools. This would mean the study of their assumptions and presuppositions. Specifically, one could analyze the critical idiom of the generation of the thirties, or compare the critical vocabularies of the Athenian and Heptanisian Schools in the nineteenth century. In sum, this historical approach will determine how Greek criticism emerged, the language of its authority, the truths it produced and the mechanisms it employed to exclude others from its operations.

2) Criticism would also need to know more about its present position in society. It would have to think critically about its own situatedness, and its social and political affiliations. For this we need detailed studies of the institutional sites or spaces where criticism is permitted to operate. First of all, who is allowed to

16. Michael Herzfeld's *Ours Once More*, which traces the emergence of the field of folklore in Greece, represents the first attempt in the modern Greek context at such a study.

occupy these spaces and practice criticism? What conditions must one fulfill? Which qualifications must be met in terms of gender, education, research interests and ideological affiliation before one is given the authority to speak on Kazantzakis?

Questions concerning the institutionality of Greek criticism must take account of the differences between literary discourse in Greece and abroad. For instance in Greece, literary criticism is conducted by intellectuals and also by scholars at universities which are supported by the state. There are no scholarly (critical) journals, so knowledge is disseminated through literary magazines and the daily press. In North America, Greek criticism is practised almost exclusively by academics who are affiliated with universities and who publish in learned journals. Financial support is derived not only from the state but also from the Greek community, from foundations such as Onassis and Ouranis, multinational corporations such as Mobil and Exxon, and private donors. Greek criticism should investigate the niche it inhabits in society as well as question its alleged autonomy. Indeed, since funds for its operations must inevitably come from external sources, it should think about the implications of this support. Are there any conditions for it? Why does an institution subsidize the production of one type of knowledge and not another? Is criticism, even unwittingly, serving the interests of the state, the community, the church, the corporation and the foundation?

3) Previously I suggested that we need to know what constituted valid critical practice in the past. A similar study should be conducted into the presuppositions and truths informing contemporary literary discourse, which is composed of various interpretive communities. Each community possesses a set of assumptions which differentiate it from others, and which determine how a critic uses her/his texts. (Fish: 16) An examination of the discursive make-up of current criticism necessarily involves the study of these interpretive strategies, as represented by the following discursive positions: the amateur reviewer of *Diavazo*, the urbane intellectual of *Kathimerini*, the traditional humanist of *Nea Estia*, the young poet who writes for *I Lexi*, the liberal professor of *Hartis*, the New Critic of the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, and the poststructuralist research fellow who publishes in the radicalized *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* journal. What type of knowledge is produced by the various communities of

critics? What aesthetic and political criteria are being used in this production? Why would an article be accepted by one journal or magazine but not by another? Is there more than 'quality' and 'academic standards' at stake here?<sup>17</sup>

4) Such an examination of the epistemological and ideological assumptions of discourse, conducted diachronically, would help explain how the object of criticism — normally known as Literature — was constituted. This type of study would be concerned with the political circumstances that led to the emergence of the modern Greek literary canon, and will address the reasons why certain texts were invested with literary value while others were ignored. It would deal, for instance, with the fate of such texts as Markiyannis which was elevated to the status of Literature only after the interpretive intervention of Seferis and the generation of the thirties. It will concern itself with the opposite development, with writers such as Souris who was widely read and admired in his own time, but it is now dismissed as having no literary value. Criticism will also have to examine the reasons it excludes from the canon the popular romance novels, such as 'Nora', which have an extensive, though voiceless, audience.

Other studies will look into the movement of texts from the centre to the margins of the canon, and vice versa. Kalvos, for example, was formally re-evaluated by Palamas and drastically reinterpreted by Elytis. Cavafy, who was once dismissed as a provincial versifier of prosaic texts, is now hailed as one of Europe's greatest poets. Conversely, his contemporary Palamas was celebrated as the prime living poet of Greece but now his work suffers from embarrassing neglect. In order to understand better these phenomena, one needs to examine anthologies (and their revised editions), histories of Greek literature, encyclopaedias and school text books. Whose texts were excluded and whose included? In which historical circumstances were these decisions taken? What were the epistemological assumptions of the editors and for which segment of the audience were their editions intended?

5) Under my general comments I stated that criticism should not concern itself with Literature, but with texts in the widest

17. I have dealt with the question of the primacy of interpretive strategies in the production of literary truth in my paper 'The Modes of Reading; Or Why Interpret? A Search for the Meaning of Imenos', *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 1 & 2 (1983) 137-148.

sense, with their production and dissemination. Textuality will be the object of criticism as it once was of rhetoric, though this does not imply a return to its classical predecessor. In this way criticism can open itself to many more forms of textual manifestation in culture. From the countless exciting possibilities available I will point to three: a) The survival of nationalistic strategies of demoticism in contemporary political oratory such as that of Papandreou. b) The impact of the ideologies involved in the linguistic controversy on the composition and construction of school textbooks. c) The constitution of the image of the new post World War II bourgeoisie in Greece as manifested in advertising and the popular press. The proposals suggested here take criticism beyond Literature, and perhaps beyond itself, to set it in the realm of cultural studies.

6) Finally, since this paper deals with the politics of criticism it cannot afford to neglect the crucial aspect of sexual politics, a subject which has largely been excluded from literary discourse. As feminists argue, discourse in general has been male-defined and dominated by phalocentric assumptions which privilege the masculine perspective and naturalize it. As such, woman has been prevented from actively and meaningfully producing her own world view. Feminists, including those in literary studies, are working to redress this problem. Critics in modern Greek may contribute to this effort by seeking out and foregrounding the male-oriented presuppositions of the modern Greek critical discourse and by presenting alternative strategies. This task would not only, or necessarily, involve the examination of such traditional topics as the position of women in Kazantzakis, or Kazantzakis' sexism. What would prove more productive would be an analysis of the ways in which women have been denied their voice in both literature and criticism. In the past many well-known women writers such as Theoni Drakopoulou (Myrtiotissa), Eleni Ourani (Alkys Thrylos), Chrysoula Argyriadou (Zoe Karelli), and Hebe Skandalaki (Mellisanthi) have been compelled to adopt pseudonyms in order to participate in literary discourse. But can one be certain that our current critical vocabulary represents woman's perspective even though she is not forced to adopt such drastic measures? Does this paper and the proposals it offers necessarily provide a position from which woman can speak? Is not 'woman' like 'man' a cultural construct? If so, is it possible

ultimately to discard these rigid categories and the corresponding roles and perspectives they legislate and enforce?

The basic idea running through my general and specific comments is that of resistance against the totalization of knowledge and the concentration of authority. Criticism, as a social discourse, should oppose these two tendencies within itself, and in society as a whole, by exposing power relations, revealing mechanisms of exclusion, and by allying itself with the repressed. In this act of defiance the role of the critic is crucial. He/she must struggle relentlessly against the totalitarian and procrustean inclinations inherent in thought. For this she/he must possess the integrity, and perhaps audacity, to scrutinize persistently, and if need be repudiate, his/her most cherished and fundamental truths.

Indiana University

#### References

- Barthes, Roland (1968). *Writing Degree Zero*, trans. A. Lavers and C. Smith (New York).
- Eagleton, Terry (1983). *Literary Theory, An Introduction* (Oxford).
- Derrida, Jacques (1975). 'Purveyor of Truth', *Yale French Studies* 52, 31-113. (1977). *Of Grammatology*, trans. G. Spivak (Baltimore). (1978). *Writing and Difference*, trans. A. Bass (Chicago). (1981a). *Positions*, trans. A. Bass (Chicago). (1981b). *Dissemination*, trans. B. Johnson (Chicago).
- Flaubert, Gustave (1980). *Correspondence II*, ed. J. Bruneau (Paris).
- Fish, Stanley (1980). *Is There A Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge/Mass.).
- Foucault, Michel (1972). 'The Discourse on Language', in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. Smith (New York). (1973). *The Order of Things* (New York). (1979). 'My Body, This Paper, This Fire', trans. G. Bennington, *Oxford Literary Review* 4/7, 9-28. (1983). 'On the Generalology of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress', in H. Dreyfus, P. Rabinow, *Michael Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2nd. ed. (Chicago).
- Havelock, Erick (1963). *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge/Mass.).
- Kazantzakis, Nikos (1973). *Βίος και Πολιτεία του 'Αλέξη Ζορμπά* (Athens).
- Leitch, Vincent (1983). *Deconstructive Criticism. An Advanced Introduction* (New York).
- Mallarmé, Stéphane (1945). *Oeuvres Complètes*, eds. H. Mondov, G. Jean-Aubry (Paris).
- McLuhan, Marshall (1962). *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (Toronto).
- Miller, J. Hillis (1980). 'The Figure in the Carpet', *Poetics Today* I, 3, 107-118.
- Norris, Christopher (1982). *Deconstruction: Theory and Practice* (London).
- Ong, Walter (1982). *Orality and Literacy* (London).
- Plato (1973). *The Phaedrus and Letters VII and VII*, trans. W. Hamilton (Harmondsworth).
- Riddel, Joseph (1979). 'Re-doubling the Commentary', *Contemporary Literature* 20, Spring, 237-250.

- Rorty, Richard (1982). *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis).  
 Said, Edward (1978). 'The Problem of Textuality: Two Exemplary Positions', *Critical Inquiry* 4/4, 673-714.  
 Sprinker, Michael (1980). 'Textual Politics: Foucault and Derrida', *Boundary 2*, 8/3, 75-98.  
 Steiner, George (1969). 'On Reading Marshall McLuhan, in *Language and Silence* (Harmondsworth).

## Time out of Mind: The Relationship Between Story and Narrative in Solomos' 'The Cretan'

PETER MACKRIDGE

The work of half a dozen scholars, which has appeared during the last twenty years, has brought about a veritable revolution in the way Solomos' poetry (and in particular 'The Cretan') can be read. Their publications have enabled us at last to view Solomos' work in its proper context and in its proper perspective.

The first and without doubt the most significant of these publications was the late Linos Politis' edition of the autograph manuscripts (Solomos 1964),<sup>1</sup> which literally made it possible for the first time for anyone to *read* what could not previously be deciphered except by a handful of dedicated and experienced palaeographers (foremost among whom was, of course, Politis himself). With the *Autograph Works* before us, we need no longer rely solely on Polylas' (albeit inspired) choice of variants; instead, we can observe the mature poems in the very process of their growth, appreciating the whole variety of versions that Solomos considered using.

Next, it was Politis again who (1970), guiding the reader through the labyrinth of Solomos' drafts of 'The Cretan', reiterated an argument first formulated in 1948,<sup>2</sup> that 'The Cretan' is a complete unity, with beginning, middle and end: nevertheless, even though Politis did not see the poem as a fragment, he still con-

1. The first volume contains photographic reproductions of all the manuscripts, the second (using the same pagination) a printed transcription of them. References in this article will be as follows: AE, followed by page number, then column number (A=1, B=2), and line number. Thus, AE378A41 = p. 378, col. 1, l. 41.

2. Politis (1958). The paper was originally delivered in 1948.

sidered what we have of it to be a complete episode from a longer epico-lyric poem which Solomos planned but never wrote. In a paper published in 1975, Maronitis, taking his cue from Politis, made a brilliant analysis of the temporal structure of 'The Cretan', demonstrating, by analysing its 'secret geometry' (Maronitis 1975: 8), that the poem is indeed complete. Beaton (1976) not only supported the argument that 'The Cretan' is a complete poem (he also provided a sensitive translation of the poem into English),<sup>3</sup> but made a valuable contribution to the interpretation of this and other poems, particularly the 'Porphyras'.

Coutelle, in a thesis completed in 1969 but not published until 1977, first suggested that 'The Cretan' was incomplete only in so far as it was intended to be one of a group of poems constituting a larger composition, about whose identity (and existence) he was uncertain. In this book he also provided copious details about (and perceptive insights into) Solomos' Italian literary education, and contributed significantly to the interpretation of the poems up to and including 'The Cretan'. Papadopoulou-Ioannidou (1978), in a comprehensive analysis of the drafts of the same poem, provided a new edition based on Solomos' final draft, and in so doing made it clear for the first time on what basis Polylys had put together his own edition (relying on some misreadings and a certain amount of imagination). Kehayoglou (1979) presented two alternative new editions of the 'Porphyras' based on the manuscripts. And, most recently, Tsantsanoglou (1982) finally demonstrated the completeness of 'The Cretan' by proving that Coutelle's intuition was correct: Solomos had planned to make 'The Cretan' into one of six elements in a complex of poems, each of whose other constituents Tsantsanoglou has convincingly identified. 'The Cretan' is thus complete and autonomous, and there is no evidence that Solomos had ever

3. This otherwise excellent rendering is slightly marred by two deliberate but inadequately justified omissions (Polylys' 18.1-6 and 22.3-20) and by a few mistranslations, three of which should be corrected here: (i) 21.17: ἀστοχισμένη is rendered 'unthought' instead of 'forgotten'; (ii) 22.21 and 23: πλέξιμο 'swimming' rendered as 'perplexity' (μπλέξιμο), which causes further confusion in ll. 23-4; and (iii) 22.43: λαλούμενο '(musical) instrument' mistranslated as 'singing voice', which spoils the symmetry of this recapitulation of the negative similes in the preceding lines. Philip Sherrard, in an otherwise apt translation of this section in his fine essay on Solomos (1981: 23), renders λαλούμενο simply as 'sound'.

planned it as part of some larger poem. Although the final draft that Solomos wrote was not a definitive one, and the poem was not quite finished, it is definitely a complete whole. With these scholarly publications in mind we can now proceed to further interpretations of the poem.

\* \* \*

In this article I am concerned to examine 'The Cretan' primarily as a narrative work and to contribute to its interpretation by analysing particularly the temporal relationships between story and narrative. For this purpose, I shall use some of the terminology devised by Gérard Genette (1972; 1980; 1983) for the structural analysis of narrative. I shall for the most part refer to the Politis edition of Solomos' poems (Solomos 1961)<sup>4</sup>, which more or less follows the original edition by Polylys. Since the publication of the manuscripts by Politis and the edition of the final draft by Papadopoulou-Ioannidou, one has to justify such an adherence to an obsolete text: Polylys' version is, however, that which is widely known, and material that does not appear in that edition rarely makes a substantial difference to my argument. I shall nevertheless feel free to refer to the *Autograph Works* where necessary.<sup>5</sup>

Before proceeding further, it is worth reminding the reader that both the title Ο Κρητικός and the subtitle (Απόσπασμα), as well as all the *points de suspension* in Polylys' version, were supplied not by the author but by the editor (the only possible hint at a title in the manuscripts is 'Il Cretense' [AE411, 2: see

4. I would suggest that in future editions the following punctuation changes should be made: (i) 20.5 should have no comma at the end (the comma suggests that the mystery 'narrowed nature', while the couplet actually means that the mystery 'constrained nature to bedeck itself', etc.); and (ii) 22.14 should end not with an ἄνω τελεία but with a full stop followed by a dash (to match those at the end of l. 4, where the parenthesis begins).

5. The question whether a completely new, easily usable 'reading edition' of Solomos based on his manuscript is required or even justified is a thorny one. I see little point in perpetuating Polylys' flawed version; and I agree with Kehayoglou (1979: 184) that a new edition, such as he and Papadopoulou-Ioannidou have provided for the 'Porphyras' and 'The Cretan' respectively, is feasible and desirable. (For the opposite argument, see Tsantsanoglou 1982: 170-72). When he died, Linos Politis was preparing a third volume of the *Autograph Works* which would simply give the manuscript text in standardized orthography, with the Italian passages translated into Greek.



Tsantsanoglou 1982: 65], while the numbers of the sections are Solomos' own.

\* \* \*

'The Cretan' is one of the most tightly constructed of Solomos' poems. Every element has its essential function in the whole, and the concise and organic nature of the poem shows Solomos to have achieved what he instructed himself to do: 'Guarda di esser breve e di non insistere in nulla' (AE357B1-2). Because the poem lacks functionally useless details, it seems at first reading to be quite non-realistic; but, as I hope to demonstrate, there is a kind of realism at work in it.

While Politis stressed the primarily lyrical nature of 'The Cretan', Maronitis convincingly showed for the first time that the poem is essentially narrative in character, and that the reader can reconstruct a biography of the Cretan from his relation of his experiences (see especially Maronitis 1975: 17). Thus the poem is lyrical, in that the speaker shows scant regard for chronological narration, preferring instead to communicate his emotional reaction to his experiences; but it is a narrative poem in that he is clearly narrating a story, and a coherent series of events can be traced through his words. It is noteworthy that Solomos has preferred not to speak *in propria persona* in this poem, but instead to invent a character who speaks for him: thus the reader does not have to accept the Cretan's words as being statements by the author.

At the same time, as Savvidis has pointed out (1974: 452), 'The Cretan' is also a dramatic poem, since the narrative situation consists of a fictional character addressing an audience. Since Solomos places great emphasis in the poem on the Cretan's act of narrating (and on the Cretan's state of mind at the time of narrating), let us examine the narrative instance more closely. As is indicated in the first line of section 19 (Πιστέψετε π' ὅ,τι θα πω εἰν' ἀκριβῆ ἀλήθεια), the Cretan addresses his words to what Genette calls *narrataires extradiégétiques* (extradiegetic narratees: 1980: 260; = 1972: 266), by which he means an audience situated outside the framework of the story. One can imagine him perhaps addressing people whom he buttonholes in the street (as does Coleridge's Ancient Mariner), but since there is no mention of

this it is preferable to see him quite simply as addressing the readers of the poem. Nevertheless, I can see no justification for following the assumption of Aposolakis (n.d.: 259) and Maronitis (1975: 17) that the Cretan is a poet and that Solomos' poem is supposed to be enunciated as a poem by the narrator. It seems to me necessary to differentiate between Solomos and the Cretan: in realistic terms, the Cretan's narrative could be assumed to be simply an oral narrative in prose, and the versification to be due to Solomos, who presents the piece, as a matter of convention, in the form of a poem. Be that as it may, there is no realistic prologue to introduce the personage of the Cretan (as there is in Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner'), nor does the narrator introduce himself to his audience: on the contrary, he assumes that his addressees know his identity, and even some details of his life story. I think, however, that this does not inhibit a more or less realistic reading of the poem if we bear in mind that the Cretan's mind has become unsettled as a result of the experiences that he relates (such is also the case with the Ancient Mariner), and that furthermore his experience of a timeless vision has made it unimportant to him to adhere to a chronological narration of events.

The events alluded to in 'The Cretan' are focalized through the consciousness of the narrator at the time of the narration. But, in his abnormal psychological state, the Cretan narrator, instead of relating his story in chronological sequence, moves backwards and forwards in time as ideas become associated in his mind: the order of the events narrated is dictated not by their chronological or causal relationship but by the association of ideas. In his notes addressed to himself, Solomos stressed the psychological basis of the poem's cohesion: 'Il breve o lungo tratteggiare non è cosa materiale ma *Psicologica*' (AE359A11-13: my italics). It seems to me, then, that, just as most (if not all) of his major poems were based on real events,<sup>6</sup> so in this poem Solomos was concerned that there should be a realistic explanation for the narrator's behaviour: he was aiming at a kind of psychological realism.<sup>7</sup>

6. Cf. Savvidis 1974: 453. It may well be that Solomos based the story of 'The Cretan' partly on a story told by a Cretan refugee. At all events, the action should be placed about 1823, not 'after the Turkish conquest of the island' (Sherrard 1981: 22).

7. With reference to this poem Solomos instructed himself: 'Guarda che ogni cosa sia spiccia e *naturale*' (AE359A1: my italics).

There is, then, a discrepancy between the order of story-time (the order in which the events are supposed to have taken place) and the order of narrative-time (the order in which they are narrated), as Maronitis was the first to point out in a comprehensive manner. The chronological sequence of events in the story can be reconstructed from direct and indirect references in the narrative, as follows (I am dividing up the material rather differently from Maronitis):

1. Childhood (21.16)
2. Youth (21.13-15; 22.16)
3. Earlier battles with the Turks (22.6; 22.17-18)
4. The Labyrinth (22.19-20)
5. Wandering on Psiloritis (22.35-42)<sup>8</sup>
6. Final defeat, slaughter of family and flight from Crete (19.2-3; 21.31-36)
7. The storm (18; 20.1-2)
8. Calm (20.3-10)
9. The apparition of the 'moon-clad woman' (20.11-22.4)
10. Continuation of the swimming (22.15-22)
11. The magical sound (22.23-54)
12. Arrival at the shore and realization that the fiancée is dead (22.55-58)
13. The power of the Cretan's arm since his arrival (22.5-14)
14. The narrative instance (19.1-4)
15. The Resurrection (19.5-18).

The central episode is clearly constituted by motifs 7-12, which (unlike the other motifs) are presented as a continuous series and narrated in chronological order, albeit with interruptions.

As is clear from the references to the text in the previous paragraph, the order in which the events are narrated is quite different. The sequence of the chief motifs as far as the narrative is concerned is as follows:

- A. The storm (18)
- B. The assurance of the truth of the Cretan's narrative (19.1-4)

8. In fact, it is impossible to reconstruct the relative order in which 3, 4 and 5 occurred.

- C. The Resurrection (19.5-18)
- D. The storm gives way to calm (20.1-10)
- E. The moon-clad woman appears and vanishes (20.11-22.4)
- F. The hand (22.5-14)
- G. Brief resumption of swimming (22.15-22)
- H. The magical sound (22.23-54)
- J. Arrival at the shore (22.55-58)

Of these sections, A, D, E, G, H and J constitute the main narrative and cover the central episode. The vision of the moon-clad woman and the presence of the magical sound take up 46 and 32 lines of the text respectively, while the more realistic aspects of the central episode take up 28 lines, the remaining 28 of the total of the poem's 134 lines referring to events completely outside the central episode.

What I have called the main narrative in the previous paragraph (corresponding to motifs 7-12 in the story) is what Genette now calls the *récit primaire* (primary narrative).<sup>9</sup> It is the primary narrative not only because it takes up most of the poem but because the Cretan sees the episode it relates — the culmination of a series of acutely painful experiences — as being the central event of his life, and one that gives a meaning to everything else he mentions. This primary narrative is the starting point for excursions backwards and forwards in time on the narrator's part. It is to the primary narrative and the excursions from it that I wish now to turn my attention.

Maronitis discerned four 'epochs' in the Cretan's story, which he viewed more or less as concentric circles: thus much of what he called the Cretan's pre-history and post-history is treated together as a single 'epoch' surrounding the central episode. For my purposes I prefer to see each element of the plot as being in a linear relationship to the others.

Genette calls all divergences from the primary narrative *anachronies* (Genette 1980: 35-47; = 1972: 78-89). Anachronies that look backwards in time he calls *analepses* (e.g., here, all references to the Cretan's experiences before his 'ordeal by water'); those that refer to events later in the story-time he calls *prolepses* (e.g., here, references to the Cretan's begging, or to the Resur-

9. Genette 1983: 20. He had previously called it *recit premier*.

rection). In this poem the anachronies are *external*, in that they refer to a time outside the chronological boundaries of the primary narrative. Thus there are indeed gaps in the story: outside the central episode, Solomos uses a good deal of *paralipsis* ('giving less information than is necessary in principle': Genette 1980: 195; = 1972: 211). The result of the combination of non-chronological narration of events and the communication of a bare minimum of information is a sense of mystery and enigma, and it is no wonder that early readers of this poem were puzzled as to what was going on.

The most essential piece of information which is suppressed — at least in the version edited by Polyas<sup>10</sup> — is that the reason why the Cretan is swimming with his fiancée in the storm is that they have been shipwrecked. No other piece of information is needed for the reader to follow the essentials of the story. But even in the narration of the central episode Solomos (deliberately this time) withheld a vital piece of information, if only temporarily. With reference to the Cretan's mention of the feel of his heartbeat against his fiancée's body (22.21-22), Solomos reminded himself: 'Si faccia questo per allontanare per ora il sospetto che essa sia morte' (AE361B23-4). For the girl *is* dead by this time (we shall return to this towards the end of the article), but the poet does not want the reader to know she has died until the very last word of the poem.

It is notable that almost all the anachronies in 'The Cretan' are expressed in subordinate clauses: thus, even at the grammatical level, they are subordinated to the primary narrative. One example is 21.13-16:

Έλεγα πως την είχα ιδεί πολύν καιρόν οπίσω,  
 καν σε ναό ζωγραφιστή με θαυμασμό περίσσο,  
 κάνε την είχε ερωτικά ποιήσει ο λογισμός μου,  
 καν τ' όνειρο, όταν μ' έθρεφε το γάλα της μητρός μου.

Here the analogues conjured up in his mind by the apparition of the moon-clad woman are all expressed as a function of έλεγα

10. As Papadopoulou-Ioannidou points out (1979: 27), a mention of the shipwreck occurs only in the first draft, despite Solomos' instructions to himself that 'bisogna far capire πως ήτανε καραβοτσακισμένοι' (AE355A11-12). This paralipsis in the text has misled some commentators (including Sherrard 1981: 22) into concluding that the Cretan and his fiancée are in a boat during the central episode.

πως ('I thought'). This kind of anachrony is motivated by analogues occurring to the narrator at the time of the story (i.e. the events related). Other syntactically subordinated anachronies are presented as being motivated at the time of the narration; such is 22.16-20:

με δύναμη που δέν ειχα μήτε στα πρώτα νιάτα,  
 μήτε όταν εκροτούσαμε, πετώντας τα θηκάρια,  
 μάχη στενή με τους πολλούς ολίγα παλληκάρια,  
 μήτε όταν τον μπομπο-Ισούφ και τ'ς άλλους δυο βαρούσα  
 σύρριζα στη Λαβύρινθο π' αλαίμαργα πατούσα.

This time the memories (subordinated by *που* and *όταν*), acting as points of comparison with the Cretan's new-found strength, are presented as if they occur to him at the time of narration.

There are only a few grammatically independent anachronies in 'The Cretan'. These are: (i) the parenthetical passage concerning the Resurrection (19.5-18); and (ii) the motif of the hand (22.5-14), in which the narrator talks about repeated events that take place after the time of the central episode. It is significant that both of these are prolepses rather than analepses. A borderline case would appear to be represented by 21.31-36 (concerning the slaughter of his family), but the whole of 21.29-38 really depends on the words *αν ήθελε της πω* (21.28): it is a passage of reported speech (or, if one can use the expression, reported thought) dependent upon a verb of saying.

\* \* \*

Let us now proceed, in the form of a running commentary, to examine the anachronies in 'The Cretan' and try to see whether we can find a realistic, and even logical, motivation for them.

After the introductory section (18), in which the Cretan begins the narrative of his ordeal by water *in medias res*, he seems to feel that, before relating his visions, he must interrupt himself to vouch for the truth of what he is about to tell. 19.1 emphasizes the narrative situation, while the future *θα πω* refers forward to a later part of the narrative (from 20.1 onwards). Genette talks of the testimonial function (1983: 90) of prolepses that reach up to the present of narration: 'they are testimonies to the intensity of the present memory, and to some extent authenticate the narrative of the past' (1980: 69; = 1972: 107). To guarantee the

veracity of what he is about to relate, he swears by various things that he holds sacred: (in Polyas' version) his wounds, his dead comrades-in-arms (thus referring back to a stage of his story prior to the central episode), and the soul of his beloved (thus referring to her death, of which in the story he becomes conscious at the very end of the central episode, and which is mentioned in the last two words of the narrative). Solomos omitted this last oath from the final draft, perhaps so as not to hint at the girl's death until the very end of the poem (Papadopoulou—Ioannidou 1978: 40), a consideration related to his omitting to mention that the girl is dead, which I referred to above. In place of Polyas' 19.2-4, the final draft has:

μά τες ψυχές που μ' έκαψαν \* \* \* \* \*  
 μά τα μυστήρια τ' άχραντα οπού τα μνέω και τρέμω.  
 μά την ημέρα τη στερνή που δε θα βγάλει κρότους  
 \* \* \* \* \* πρώτους  
 που εμάθαν[ε] τη βλαστημιά και \* \* \* \* \* άστη  
 από τ' ανθρώπου τη λαλιά που 'ναι πνοή του πλάστη  
 (AE377A11-16).

At all events, mention of his fiancée's soul or of the 'last day' leads the Cretan to imagine seeking his beloved at the Resurrection, which he goes on to refer to in 19.5-18.<sup>11</sup>

After the parenthetical passage in Paradise, the narrator returns in 20.1 to resume the story that he had interrupted after the end of section 18. Now he describes the storm turning to calm, and the apparition of the moon-clad woman, which takes us up to 21.12. For the next four lines he refers to his earlier life as he attempts to identify the 'sweet, forgotten memory' stirred by the vision of the moon-clad woman.<sup>12</sup> At this point it is interesting to note that the mention of his mother (21.16) refers both to an

11. This explanation of the Cretan's train of thought at this juncture was already suggested by Apostolakis (n.d.: 251).

12. The (not necessarily mutually exclusive) memories or analogues are three in number (each introduced by *κάν(ε)*). There are other instances in which groups of three phrases or sentences appear in the poem: the three oaths (introduced by *μά*) in 19.1-4 (in Polyas' edition); the three phrases beginning *μήτε* in 22.16-20 (that the Cretan is referring to three separate occasions here was perhaps first pointed out by Coutelle, who also first explained that the 'Labyrinth' refers to an actual location in modern Crete [1977: 419-29]; and the three extended negative similes beginning *Δεν είναι* in 22.25-42.

earlier time in the story and to a later passage in the narrative (21.34), where he mentions his mother's death in the unspoken thoughts addressed to the moon-clad woman. His attention returns to the time of the central episode in 21.17, but his unspoken thoughts allow him to refer to an earlier episode again in 21.31-36, the mention of these events being justified as an elucidation and elaboration of 21.30 (*όμως εξεχειλίσανε τα βάθη της καρδιάς μου*).

22.1-4 concludes the vision of the moon-clad woman, while the last of these lines also refers to the moment when she first appeared (*μόλις εγώ την είδα*).<sup>13</sup> 22.5-14 consists of a prolepsis (itself containing two analepses) which should doubtless be followed as well as preceded by a dash. In this parenthesis, which is entirely motivated by the mention of the woman's tear-drop on his hand, the narrator refers to the change in the power of his hand since the time of his vision. But he illustrates this transformation by comparing the hand negatively with its former self: whereas in the past it drew a knife whenever it encountered a Turk, its present function is to beg for bread. The passing alms-giver is so moved by the Cretan's pitiful appearance that he has tears in his eyes (22.8): the tears refer back to the woman's tear-drop (22.3), while the eyes of the passer-by lead the Cretan in the very next line (22.9) to refer to his own eyes, which close, heavy with grief, whereupon he has nightmares that bring back to him his ordeal during the story (here he refers once again to the thunderbolt and the girl of section 18). When he awakes he places the palm of this same hand on his brow, and his mind is calmed (*γαληνεύει*: 22.14). The mention of calm brings him back to the central episode, and briefly (22.15) he begins to resume his account of his swimming in the sea, which is perhaps no longer rough: the words *τ' άγρια και* (22.15) appear to be the result of a misreading by Polyas of *π' αγρίκαα* (Papadopoulou-Ioannidou 1978: 119).<sup>14</sup> The interplay of imagery between eye, tear and

13. Only in the final draft of the poem does the division between sections 21 and 22 appear where it is indicated in Polyas' edition, and then only as the result of an after-thought on the poet's part (see AE378A41 and 379A1); in earlier drafts the division was placed after the first mention of the hand (22.4 in Polyas' edition: see, for instance, AE370B3 and 371A1).

14. By contrast, the adjective *μυρωδάτα*, seemingly incongruous as a modifier of 'waves', actually represents the first inkling of the imminent magical sound, which

hand is complex in this passage: εδάκρυσαν τα μάτια της (22.2), δάκρυ (22.3),<sup>15</sup> χέρι, είδα (22.4), χέρι (22.5), αγνάντευεν (22.6), τού, το (22.7), δακρυσμένο μάτι (22.8), μάτια (22.9), παλάμη (22.14), then αυτό (22.15). But his arm now possesses a new strength, which he compares favourably with its military prowess during the time when he was in his first youth and when he fought the Turks (Maronitis 1975: 15).

The description of the swimming is again briefly resumed in 22.21-22. Here αυτό (1.22) must mean '[the fact that] my heart was beating against my true love's side' (it is not specified whether she is dead or alive), while τ' refers to the act of swimming (το πλέξιμο). But the swimming becomes slower as the Cretan is lulled by the magical sound that accompanies him.

The narrator's inevitably unsuccessful attempts to convey these ineffable sounds (ανεκδιήγητοι: 22.49 — he is not even certain whether it is one or more!) take up 22.24-50. The bulk of this passage consists of the remarkable sequence of three negative similes, which serve to indicate that the magical sound resembles nothing on earth.

The first of the three earthly sounds mentioned is the voice of a girl singing of her secret love. This seems to refer to no particular time, unless one concludes from a version of 22.25 in an earlier draft (Δεν είν' φωνή της κορασιάς (il primo amore): AE363A3) that the Cretan is remembering a particular girl with whom he fell in love in his homeland: but nothing in the later drafts supports this view. At all events, the mention of a κορασιά here cannot fail to recall the Cretan's fiancée (about whom the same word is used in 18.4 and 20.9). The second sound is the song of the Cretan nightingale, which refers to unspecified occasions in Crete; while the third is the sound of the flute (φιαμπόλι: actually a Zakynthian rather than a Cretan word) which the Cretan remembers hearing while wandering alone on Mt. Psiloritis (Ida) and wondering whether there was any hope that his island would be liberated. It is noteworthy that the second

is compared to του Μαϊού τες μυρωδιές (22.48: ευωδιές in Polyas); it also refers back to 20.4: σαν περιβόλι ευώδησε.

15. The form δάκρυ is used here in various parts of the manuscript, never Polyas' (and Papadopoulou-Ioannidou's) δάκρυν.

and third similes contain references to the sea, even though the sounds emanate from the land.

But the magical sound resembles neither 'instrument nor bird nor voice' (22.43),<sup>16</sup> nor does it cause an echo (22.46). The actual effect of the magical sound on his mind at the time he was hearing it is described in 22.51-54. In l. 52 the four objects that should have concerned him (the sky or heaven, the sea, the shore and, last — but not least? — the girl) have been snatched from his soul, and he (i.e. his soul) desires to be parted from his body in order to follow the sound (or, as I shall suggest later, the girl's soul, though he is unaware of it): this desire is the converse of the girl's haste to enter her immortal body in 19.14.

Finally, the Cretan describes himself (22.55-58) recovering his senses and becoming aware of nature and his beloved: he arrives at the shore<sup>17</sup> and joyfully lays her down on it, only to find she is dead. Maronitis pointed to the mention of the distant shore in the poem's first line and to that of the arrival at the shore in the penultimate verse as evidence that 'The Cretan' is a complete poem, and one with a cyclical structure (Maronitis 1975: 13): it ends at the goal which it had set itself at the outset. Unfortunately for this idea, the poem in its final (though not definitive) draft does not begin with the motif of the shore, which appears only in the third line. It seems that Polyas found the opportunity of placing the shore at the beginning and end too attractive to be missed; and I am not one to criticise his truly admirable aesthetic sense. As for the death of the girl, the last couplet appears very nearly in its final form almost at the beginning of the manuscript of 'The Cretan' (AE355A18-19). This shows that Solomos was conscious of the end of the poem even as he was planning the beginning; and the insistent recurrence of the rhyme

16. The drafts show Solomos at pains to alter the order of elements in this line constantly in an effort to find the most effective way of briefly recapitulating the material of 22.25-42. The final draft has φωνή, ποῦλί, λαλούμενο (AE379A46), indicating that having written the three nouns in the same order as that in which their referents are mentioned in the preceding lines, he decided finally to reverse the order, producing a kind of chiasmic mirror image of the foregoing.

17. That the Cretan is already near the shore when he hears the magical sound is clear from Solomos' reference in the manuscript to 'la musica che sentiva all'accostarsi all riva' (AE359A6-7). Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that the Cretan is within sight of the shore right from the beginning of the poem.

αρραβωνιασμένη-πεθαμένη throughout the manuscript suggests that Solomos intended the girl to be seen as 'betrothed to death'.

\* \* \*

I have attempted so far to point to the anachronies in 'The Cretan' and to show how they are psychologically (and thus realistically) motivated. Since his two visions — first, the sight of the moon-clad woman, then the magical sound —, which are essentially timeless (coming, as they do, to interrupt the uninteruptible flow of natural time), he has turned inwards: the chronological series of events that he relates has become confused in his mind, and he now wanders back and forth through time, making all his memories and imaginings contemporaneous and therefore timeless.

Just as the two visions set his memory to work as he quarries into his past experience to find some hidden deposit that may or may not be related to what he sees and hears, so his narration of events can set him imagining the eternal life after his future death, in which σαν πρώτα την αγαπώ (19.10): his love is as it was in the beginning, and past and future are united. The two visions send him into an ecstasy that removes him from his physical situation. In the first, the moonlight is transformed into midday sunlight (21.7) as he receives his inner illumination: the night is irradiated (as it seems to him) by his memories of a divine presence (21.14-16), and, just as water gushes out of a dark<sup>18</sup> rock into the sunlight (21.19-20), so his memory transforms darkness into light. When he hears the magical sound, his soul is transfigured ('la transfigurazione dell'anima': AE379B9-11) and the sound empties him of all sense impressions. Each of the two visions can be seen as being instantaneous, taking place in a flash of light (cf. the 'Porphyras', 8.2) rather like the lightning flashes mentioned in section 18. The three extended negative similes in 22.25-42, together with the following lines (down to 22.50), give the impression that a considerable time has elapsed. It is, however, narrative-time, not story-time: the story-time stands

18 In some drafts — including the final one the water spurts forth από βράχο σκοτεινό (AE378B12).

still, interrupted by the discourse, which vainly attempts to express the inexpressible.

Mention of the three negative similes in section 22 brings me to say more about the function of similes in 'The Cretan'. Genette uses the term *achrony* to refer to 'an anachrony deprived of every temporal connection, which is an event we must ultimately take to be dateless and ageless' (1980: 84; = 1972: 119). Of course, the episode in Paradise — and even the evocation of the two visions — could be said to constitute achronies, but there is another important non-temporal element in the narrative of 'The Cretan': the vehicles of the similes.<sup>19</sup> These are the only instances in 'The Cretan' where a really timeless (in the sense of general) situation is referred to: they are the only phrases containing verbs that do not refer to *events* in the narrator's real or imagined story. The similes in 'The Cretan' are remarkable for two reasons: (a) because most of them are expressed negatively, and (b) because some of the vehicles take on a semantic autonomy that leads them to become tenors in themselves.

Solomos' (or the Cretan's) purpose in giving some of his similes a negative expression is no doubt to stress the impossibility of conveying precisely what the visions were *like*. The first negative simile is that in 20.7-8:

Δεν είν' πνοή στον ουρανό, στη θάλασσα, φυσώντας  
ούτε όσο κάνει στον ανθό η μέλισσα περνώντας.<sup>20</sup>

(The vehicle is non-temporal because it refers not to a specific event but to a generally observed phenomenon). The most extended group of negative similes is of course the triad in 22.25-43. Each of these three begins with the word *δεν*, which also recurs on every line from 43 to 47. Finally, 22.50 virtually consists of another negative simile (Μόλις είν' έτσι δυνατός ο

19. I refer to I.A. Richards' famous distinction, with respect to metaphor, between 'tenor' (the thing meant) and 'vehicle' (the thing said) (1936: especially 95-6).

20. A similar negative simile can be found in Ελεύθεροι πολιορκημένοι, Γ6.18. Also cf:

No stir of air was there,  
Not so much life as on a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,  
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest  
(Keats, 'Hyperion', bk. I, ll. 7-10).



Έρωτας και ο Χάρος: i.e. even Love and Death are not quite as powerful as the magical sound).

The vehicle in 21.19-20,

Σαν το νερό που το θωρεί το μάτι ν' αναβρύζει,  
ξάφνου οχ τα βάθη του βουνού, κι ■ ήλιος το στολίζει,

is used as an analogy for the 'old, sweet and forgotten memory' suddenly appearing before the Cretan in all its vividness. But it is more than just a concrete analogy for a mental process, for in the next line he tells us,

Βρύση έγινε το μάτι μου κι ομπρός μου δεν εθώρα.

It is as if the vehicle of the simile (which is of course part of the discourse) is actually being enacted in the story: as if μάτι, αναβρύζει, θωρεί, and the image of the water in 21.19-20 become the μάτι, βρύση, δεν εθώρα, and the image of tears in 21.21. The vision conjures up the memory which, as it wells up, summons the tears that then prevent the Cretan from seeing the vision as he turns his attention inwards, to his σωθικά. Another vehicle that gains its autonomy is the third of the negative similes in section 22 (22.36-42), where the Cretan is so carried away by his memory of Crete that he proceeds to relate details of his former life that are interesting as elements of the story, not only as part of the discourse.<sup>21</sup>

By contrast, however, Solomos actually stresses the passage of time at certain points in the poem outside the narration of the central episode (contrast the night becoming midday in the vision: 21.7), both in 21.33-34 —

21. A study of Solomos' similes throughout his poetic work would, I believe, be rewarding. The importance of similes to the poet himself is indicated by the fact that, in the manuscript of 'The Cretan' (AE366B1-5) he instructs himself, άνοιξε μια φάλα (= 'breach'), at the two points where he was later to insert the similes of the lodestone (21.10) and the gushing spring (21.19-20). A typically Solomic simile is that in 21.26: βλέπουνε μες στην άβυσσο και στην καρδιά του ανθρώπου (i.e. they can see into the heart of man, which is like an abyss) — cf. τα σπλάχνα τους κι η θάλασσα ποτέ δεν ησυχάζουν (Ελευθεροί πολιορκημένοι, B9.8: i.e. their σπλάχνα, like the sea, can never rest), but also Burns's 'The best-laid schemes o'mice and men/Gang aft agley' (i.e. 'of men, as of mice').

τον γέροντα τον κύρην μου εκάψανε το βράδι  
και την αυγή μου ρίξανε τη μάνα στο πηγάδι —

and, more significantly, throughout the triad of similes in section 22: dusk (βγαίνει τ' άστρο του βραδιού: 22.26) gives way to night (ολονυχτίς: 22.31), then dawn (πρόβαλε η αυγή: 22.33) and finally perhaps midday (έβλεπα τ' άστρο τ' ουρανού μεσουρανίς να λάμπει: 22.37). Thus these similes are united not only by their analogy with the magical sound and by their connection with the Cretan's memories of his island, but also by the seemingly chronological succession of the times of day at which the remembered experiences take place.

\* \* \*

Many interesting conclusions as to the poem's meaning may be drawn from an examination of its symbolism and imagery (especially the references to seeing, speaking and hearing). In the last part of this essay, however, I should like to confine myself to an examination of ■ question that exercised especially the early critics of Solomos' poetry: what does the moon-clad woman represent?

Coutelle (1977: 431) lists the various interpretations that have been attached to the moon-clad woman (she represents nature, liberty, the Motherland, Venus Urania, the fiancée's soul, the fiancée herself, or the poet's consciousness), and concludes that none of them is satisfactory. His own view is that 'celle qui est vêtue de lune représente une certaine forme de l'amour divin', a common denominator of Venus Urania, the Virgin Mary and Religion (1977: 474). I am afraid I cannot concur. Starting, as Coutelle clearly does, from Solomos' phrase that the central theme of 'The Cretan' is 'l'amore divinizzato' (AE411, 2), I have come to the conclusion that the moon-clad woman represents the immortal soul of the fiancée, as I hope to demonstrate.

In the fourth line of the poem, the three thunderbolts are described as falling 'very close to the girl': this indicates that she is already in danger. Similar words are used in 20.9-12:

Όμως κοντά στην κορασιά, που μ' έσφιξε κι εχάρη,  
εσειότουν τ' ολοστρόγγυλο και λαγαρό φεγγάρι.  
και ξετυλίξει ογλήγορα κάτι που εκείθε βγαίνει,  
κι ομπρός μου ιδού που βρέθηκε μια φεγγαροντυμένη.

Thus Polylas' edition; but a version of lines 10-11 appears in the final draft in the following form:

ανακατώθηκε το λαγάρ φεγγάρι  
σε κάτι οπού μου φάνηκε που από το πέλαο βγαίνει (fuori)  
(AE377A39).

While in Polylas' version εκείθε might suggest that the moon-clad woman emerges from the moonlight, the last version of the line that Solomos wrote states unambiguously that the apparition comes out of the sea. The indication 'fuori' at the end of the line suggests, however, that Solomos found the expression too explicit and again wanted to avoid referring to the girl's death in such a clear, if indirect, manner.

It is in the words μ' έσφιξε in 20.9 that we have the last indication in the poem that the girl is alive. It is my contention that her tight embrace of her lover is her last signal of her love for him as she joyfully (κι εχάρη) gives up the ghost. The word εχάρη contains more significance than it appears at first reading to bear: it looks forward to the joy with which the Cretan lays his fiancée down on the shore in the last line of the poem (a joy that is immediately succeeded by a realization that she is dead), and it may also be connected with the mention of Eros and Thanatos (Χάρος) in 22.50. Love and Death are not viewed as antithetical concepts, but as being inextricably bound up. While Eros and Thanatos dominate man's physical life (cf. Έρως και Χάρος πάντοτε/δουλεύουν εδώ κάτω: Εις Μοναχήν, ll. 55-6), they are so powerful as to resemble supernatural forces: hence they are employed by the Cretan as points of comparison in his attempt to convey what the magical sound was like. These two forces form a bridge between earthy life and the after-life: death is the boundary between the two, while love is the means by which man can gain 'intimations of immortality'.

In Greek folk laments (and indeed in Greek burial custom), a person who dies unmarried is seen as being betrothed to Charos. That the girl in 'The Cretan' is herself betrothed to Charos has already been suggested, and this idea is reinforced by the succession of key-words in the last couplet of the poem: αρραβωνιασμένη-χαρά-πεθαμένη. Since χαρά is frequently used in traditional Greek parlance, and in the folksongs, to mean 'wed-

ding', a progression might be seen here from betrothal to marriage, then immediately to death. The similarity between the words χαρά and Χάρος has often been the subject of bitter puns in Greek folksongs.<sup>22</sup>

To return to the apparition of the moon-clad woman, there are other indications that can help us to identify her with the fiancée's immortal soul. On the very first page of the manuscripts, as soon as the moon-clad woman has appeared (she is called κόρη όμορφη και φεγγαροντυμένη: AE354B4), she is described thus:

Guardav[a] il cielo come τον εραστή κοιτάει  
και θέλει να του πει πως λίγο αργοποράει (AE354A33-4).

She was looking at the sky (or heaven) like a woman gazing at her lover and indicating that it would not be long before they were united: this suggests that the fiancée's soul is briefly tarrying to say farewell to her mortal lover before joining her heavenly bridegroom.

One crucial consideration that must be borne in mind is that, whatever the Cretan may know at the time he is narrating, he is clearly unaware *at the time of the story* of the connection between the fiancée and the moon-clad woman. This is apparent at several junctures, where he speaks of them as being separate, for instance, in 21.11 (όχι στην κόρη, αλλά σ' εμέ την κεφαλή της κλίνει), but especially when he addresses her as 'Goddess' and begs her to preserve the life of the fiancé (21.37-8), a plea she is obviously incapable of granting.

Another helpful piece of evidence is an explicit comparison made between the fiancée and the moon-clad woman on the second page of the manuscript:

Ήταν ακόμη πλια όμορφη \* \* \* \* \* άζει  
μ' όλον οπού μου φάνηκε οπού πολύ της μοιάζει,

and again,

22. E.g. Ο Χάρος κάνει μια χαρά κι ένα καλό τραπέζι (Petrooulos 1959: 252). Solomos also seems to have learned a lesson from the aesthetic of the Greek folksong when he places the mention of the girl's death abruptly at the very end of his poem, with no sentimental or other expressions commenting on the fact: cf. the last line of 'The Song of the Dead Brother' in various variants, e.g. Κι σφιχταγκαλιαστήκαν κι η ψυχή τους βγήκε (Ακαδημία Αθηνών 1962: 312).

In other words, the moon-clad woman closely resembled the fiancée, but was even more beautiful, just as the sun outshines the moon. Although Solomos abandoned these lines as being perhaps too explicit ('non insistere in nulla': he confined himself to making the Cretan see a resemblance between the moon-clad woman's eyes and those of his fiancée in 22.2), this passage may be a key to the relationship between what the Cretan, during his ordeal, sees as being two separate yet similar entities. Just as the appearance of the moon-clad woman transforms moonlight into sunlight, so she is to the fiancée as the sun is to the moon. This suggests not only that the apparition is more beautiful and radiant than the girl, but that it is the true source of a light of which the fiancée is but a reflection. Far from the Cretan's visions contributing to the girl's death, as might be supposed (his ecstasy causing him to neglect his fiancée's safety), they are actually *caused* by her death: first, her soul appears to him as it leaves her body (we may suppose that she dies by drowning or of exposure), then he hears the celestial music it makes as it rises to heaven.

In 'The Cretan' Solomos appears to be subscribing to a Platonic (and Romantic) view of love. The Cretan had fallen in love with the girl because she corresponded to his (albeit forgotten) memory of the divine. This memory of eternal life before and after death had been jogged in his mind (without his being conscious of it) at various points: in his dreams during infancy, in Christian iconography, and in his imagination (21.13-16).<sup>23</sup> These memories, in their turn, are touched off at the very point when the girl becomes spirit and joins the divine. Thus, just as his love for her is sparked off by a forgotten knowledge of eternity, so he is confident that he will be reunited with her in Paradise. It is vain to ask whether the female figure sought by the Cretan in Paradise (section 19) is the fiancée or the moon-clad woman, since they are two aspects of one and the same individual.

23. It is interesting to note that the λογισμός and όνειρο of this passage reappear in Ελεύθεροι πολιορκημένοι, Γ1.3: also cf. the κρυφό μυστήριο of 20.5 with Ελεύθεροι πολιορκημένοι, Γ1.2.

Having had his 'intimations of immortality' confirmed, however, the Cretan is far from spending the rest of his earthly life in a state of bliss. The death of his beloved, who was the only thing that he could hold on to in order to avoid falling into the deep chasm of despair (21.38), has seared him (19.4), coming as it does as the culmination of a series of violent bereavements. The Adam theme ('la cosa d'Adamo', as Solomos calls it: AE363A1), which appears in Polyas' edition only in the form of variants to 22.44, points an implicit contrast between Adam and the Cretan: while the former awakes to find that his vision of beauty has been made flesh in Eve, the Cretan regains his senses to find his beloved dead. Far from living in Eden, he must spend the rest of his earthly existence in a vale of tears (cf. Tsantsanoglou 1982: 130). Even though the tear-drop left by her soul as it departed has endowed his hand with the power to calm his mind after his nightmares, it does not prevent him continuing to experience such nightmares. The whole of life is a trial, an ordeal, as he puts it in his unspoken thoughts to the moon-clad woman (δοκίμιον εἶν' ἡ ζωή: AE372A27), and although his visions have given him the guarantee of eternal bliss in the life to come, his past and present experiences continue to cause him immense pain in his earthly existence.

As I said at the beginning of this essay, 'The Cretan' is a whole poem that is nevertheless unfinished. Without needing to ask precisely why Solomos did not overcome the small final hurdle and finish the poem (for its final draft shows that only a few finishing touches were required), we can ponder on the last few lines (in Italian prose) that appear in the manuscript of the poem, after the end of the final draft. Ominously, Solomos attempts here (after having used very little Italian in the final draft) to give a more abstract summary of the poem's message. Included in this summary is the phrase 'momento dell'Idea', which, according to Coutelle (1977: 464), is taken from Hegel and represents the first unambiguous sign of German influence on Solomos. It seems that at this point Solomos is rethinking his ideas, and instead of allowing poetry to speak, as he has been doing in the previous pages of the manuscript, he sets out to theorize. It seems to me from this piece of evidence that there is much in the traditional view (first enunciated by Zambelios (1859: 74) and repeated by several subsequent critics) that Solomos was inhibited from com-

pleting at least 'The Cretan' by his new-found interest in German philosophy. As his ideas became more ambitious, they came to outpace his poetic performance.<sup>24</sup>

University of Oxford

#### References

- Ακαδημία Αθηνών, Ελληνικά δημοτικά τραγούδια, I (Athens 1962).  
 G.M. Apostolakis, Η ποίηση στη ζωή μας, 2nd ed. (Athens n.d.).  
 R. Beaton, 'Dionysios Solomos: The Tree of Poetry', *BMGS* 2 (1976) 161-182.  
 L. Coutelle, *Formation poétique de Solomos (1815-1833)* (Athens 1977).  
 G. Genette, *Figures III* (Paris 1972) 67-282.  
 G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Oxford 1980) (translation of the above).  
 G. Genette, *Nouveau discours du récit* (Paris 1983).  
 G. Kehayoglou, Προτάσεις για τον "Πόρφυρα", in *Αφιέρωμα στον καθηγητή Αίνο Πολίτη* (Salonica 1979) 153-84.  
 D.N. Maronitis, Οι εποχές του "Κρητικού" (Athens 1975).  
 L. Papadopoulou-Ioannidou, Ο "Κρητικός" του Δ. Σολωμού στο αυτόγραφο τετράδιο Ζακύνθου αρ. 11 (Salonica 1978).  
 D. Petropoulos, Ελληνικά δημοτικά τραγούδια, II (Athens 1959).  
 L. Politis, Γύρω στο Σολωμό (Athens 1958).  
 L. Politis, Η δομή του "Κρητικού", *Κερκυραϊκά Χρονικά* 15 (1970) 181-88 (now in Politis n.d., 86-98).  
 L. Politis, Θέματα της λογοτεχνίας μας. Δεύτερη σειρά (Salonica n.d.).  
 I.A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York-London 1936).  
 G.P. Savvidis, Δυσωφανή προβλήματα δομής του "Κρητικού", *Ο Ερανιστής* 11 (1974) 443-55.  
 P. Sherrard, *The Marble Threshing Floor*, 2nd ed. (Athens 1981).  
 D. Solomos, Αυτόγραφα έργα, 2 vols., ed. L. Politis (Salonica 1964).  
 D. Solomos, Άπαντα, ed. L. Politis, 2nd ed., I: Ποιήματα (Athens 1961).  
 E. Tsantsanoglou, Μια λανθάνουσα ποιητική σύνθεση του Σολωμού (Athens 1982).  
 S. Zambelios, Πόθεν η κοινή λέξις τραγουδῶ; (Athens 1859).

24. I am grateful to my κουμπάρος, Roger Green, for reading through this article and making many helpful comments.

## Short Notes

### The Treatment of Byzantine Place-Names

ANTHONY BRYER

"But above and beyond there's still one name left over,  
 And that is the name that you never will guess;  
 The name that no human research can discover . . ."

T.S. ELIOT

The anonymus author of *An Historical Curiosity, One Hundred and Forty-One Ways of spelling Birmingham* (London 1880) unaccountably complicated things by listing his spellings in neither alphabetical nor chronological order. But he may also have been revolutionary in treating all spellings with equal respect, as names in their own right, rather than variants of 'Birmingham', the authorised version which happens to be a poor reflection of what people actually call the place. His treatment was in mind when I indexed the toponyms in David Winfield's and my *Dumbarton Oaks Study of The Byzanting Monuments and Topography of the Pontos* — alphabetically, not chronologically. In doing so, I was surprised to find how little theoretical discussion there has been on how to treat Byzantine place-names, or what happens when they are transferred from memory to written record (and back again). We can learn from Western medievalists.<sup>1</sup>

1. E.g. Margaret Gelling, *Signposts to the Past. Place-names and the History of England* (London 1978); and M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record. England 1066-1397* (London 1979). D.J. Georgakas, *The Names for the Asia Minor Peninsula and a Register of Surviving Pre-Turkish Placenames* (Heidelberg 1971) has agreeably pugnacious views but registers only about 300 names.

Problems such as the wandering name have been familiar since Ramsay.<sup>2</sup> Pontic toponyms stray even more than most, and it is often misleading to identify the site of a name too closely, however tempting. The older settlements are non-nucleated; you can walk half a morning through a major village like Hortokop without realising it is there: its centre has shifted from ancient fort, Roman staging post to Byzantine church and Turkish tea-house, each several miles apart. In particular some medieval area names, like Armenian cantonal ones, have only been found specific homes in this century: Pontic examples are medieval Derzene (now at Tercan), Cheriana (Uluşiran), Torul (Ardasa), Matzouka (Maçka), or Sourmaina (Sürmene) — the modern names are no clue to the medieval centres of each area, which lay elsewhere. Local administrators are still trying to pin down Hemşin, identified by Purchas in 1614 as the original Cimmerian Gloom of the Odyssey, XI, 14, but it remains as moveable ■ concept as Cappadocia — and still haunted.

The real problem is how one should treat the names themselves. Our Study attempts to record all Byzantine 'places' named in the area before 1461 and most subsequent names for them alone, so some 'places' accumulate a dozen or more names. Over 1000 medieval 'places' have about 700 names attested in Greek, and over 4000 recorded in more-or-less Latin, alphabets. Almost all the 'Latin' names before Modern Turkish are therefore transliterations or transcriptions from other alphabets and tongues: Arabic, Caucasian, Slavonic or Greek. Such spellings by external witnesses control local Greek documentary and literary sources, and themselves have a life of their own, like the Frankish names of the Morea. But they are bedevilled by different (or no) systems of transliteration or recording. These external sources range from compilers, copyists and miscopyists of classical periplus, Roman Itineraria, 14th-century Italian portulans and 16th-century Ottoman registers; to accounts of 13th-century English and 15th-century Spanish envoys, as well as by 17th-century French, 18th-century German and 19th-century American travellers, who heard names through Turkish, Greek or Armenian dragomans — Layard had a Nestorian Persian. It is hard to apply conventional rules of textual criticism to such a farrago, and fruitless to impose

2. W.M. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (London 1890) 82-88.

definitive spellings. Literary Byzantines, great listers of official place-names, would have disagreed, but recognised the problem by also listing current names of where bishoprics or ancient peoples and sites were or had migrated to: thus the diocese of Alania pursued one supposed Soterioupolis to another around the Euxine (which was probably a Black Sea before the Greeks). It is true that a few places were actually named: the obvious Byzantine example is Constantinople itself, which may ceremonially have been given that name on its birthday, 11 May 330.<sup>3</sup> But the way most toponyms enter circulation is best described in the Chronicle of the Morea, 1.2990, on the naming of Mistra in 1249: "And they named it Myzethras, for that was how they called it". It is also true that an orthography is justified for the literary use of literary forms of artificial names, like Soterioupolis, Constantinople (though no-one writes Konstantinoupolis), or Nikopolis — but, wait: what, for example, is Nikopolis? It ended up as a bishopric actually at Greek Koloneia, for which no Roman Colonia is recorded, and which Byzantines actually called the Black Castle of Mavrokastron before it became (now Şebini-) Karahisar. More questionably, it is true that it is occasionally possible, through 'human research' to reconstruct maybe 'original' Greek names of which there is no medieval Greek witness: what Greek name lies behind Italian 'Squify'? Does it matter? Ottoman registrars wrestled with outlandish Greek names just as the compilers of Domesday treated Anglo-Saxon names: they strangled Theoskepastos into Şoşkâystos, but, who knows, perhaps got closer to the dedication than its Greek orthography then did. Sometimes they preserved names of whose Greek existence one could only suspect: Pontic examples are 'Greek' Ophis (Turkish Of), Stylos (İstala), Herakleia (Araklı), and even a monastery of St. Orentios (Ayo Rando). But names which should apparently have a Greek orthography can be deceptive, from Trapezous (Trebizond) itself onwards, for that name masks a pre-Hellenic toponymic substratum — cf. Kerasous (Giresun), or Pityous (Pitsunda). Some

3. *Constantinople in the early eighth century: the Parastaseis Syntomoi*, edd. Averil Cameron and Judith Herrin (Leiden 1984) 132, 242-43, has a memory that Constantinople was so named on the eve of its birthday. Cf. G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale. Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris 1974) 40.

other Greek names which, enticingly, mean something, like Dipotamos (İkisu), Dromostomion (Yolağzı), or Argyropolis (Gümüşhane), turn out to be younger than the Ottoman ones they translate, for 19th-century Pontic Greek schoolmasters were quite as zealous re-namers as their Turkish successors. Nevertheless, even these are names and we can only use the names we have. To seek an 'original' or 'correct' spelling, especially in transliteration, is usually irrelevant deontology. Spoken toponyms are slippery things to catch. But if we use our written material strictly in the form that it is recorded (accusatives and all), it *can* catch names in time and place. *All forms must be treated as equally valid names within their historical context.*

That axiom proposed, should one treat place-names sequentially? The compilers of the companion volumes of the Vienna *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* naturally tend to list names as a chronological chain. True, names chase sites in time and place: Greek Ephesos from Byzantine Ayios Theologos and Frankish Altoluogo, to Ottoman Ayasuluk and (in a nice piece of etymological legerdemain) Modern Turkish Selçuk. But even this chain is misleading: different names are used simultaneously and old ones resurface. The Euxine is Black again. Literary Amisos, colloquial Aminosos, Italian Simisso and Turkish Samsun were all used by inhabitants of that scattered 'place' in the fourteenth century, and each name is 'correct'. Names, nicknames, epithets and circumlocutions are used at once for different purposes and contexts. Most Thais refer to what Westerners call Bangkok as Krung Thep ('Los Angeles'), but its third, official, name, of which T.S. Eliot would have approved, is twenty-seven words long, while it may be Westerners who preserve the oldest of them. Among a cloud of names, Constantinople, too, had its mystic one: Anthousa.<sup>4</sup>

The wholesale past re-naming of Balkan places in the interests of new national orthographies and identities has largely stuck. Odessa began it in 1795 by moving 250 miles and changing gender on the way. Every Bulgarian schoolboy has heard of San Stefano, but it is doubtful if many of the inhabitants of modern Yeşilköy, Istanbul's airport, know its old name and what happened there in 1878. It is as if one could locally forget 1815 by re-naming

4. Ioannes Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed. L. Dindorf (Bonn 1831) 322.

Waterloo. But in certain eastern vilayets of Turkey the destruction of what were taken to be Greek, Armenian, Georgian and Syriac names only got under way on a large and official scale after 1945. In many cases it was based on a misapprehension, for the names were even older. Modern Pontic places called Halt may be a reminder of Byzantine Chaldia, but that itself has a much more ancient, Urartu, echo. In one east Pontic upland valley there has probably been no Greek-speaking settlement since the sixteenth century, and indeed the only firm evidence for medieval Greek settlement is, most unusually, epigraphic: an ecclesiastical inscription dated 933/34. It is only the living name of the local village, Fetoka, which may give a clue to the dedication of the church to the Theotokos. But this is epigraphically barren land, so living names become doubly precious. The former toponymy of the Pontos, which preserved its most ancient record, has been wiped off the map as Jeanne and Louis Robert describe: "Cette éradication, cette manie de changement abolit un passé national, tout comme un bull-dozer qui détruit une nécropole ou un édifice".<sup>5</sup> Take Pontic Hortokop, which as boasted two parallel groups of probably non-Greek names since before the Antonine Itinerary:

Gizenenica,  
Chaszanenica,  
Chasdenicha,  
Charsyla/  
Intzoule

Chortokopi(o)n  
Hortokop,  
Hordogop,  
Horducap,  
Hortokobuzu,  
Hortokobuvaset,

and Hortakobubala in its most recent Turkish career. Such sonorous nomenclature has been brought to an official halt by a name of breath-taking banality: Yukariköy — the Upper Village.

Things may not, however, be so dire as the Roberts suggested. First the official name (it is still a name) of Hortokop is still largely confined to officials, in the Maçka and Trabzon registries and publications. After a generation it is too early to guess when or

5. Jeanne and L. Robert, 'La persistance de la toponymie antique dans l'Anatolie', in *La Toponymie Antique*, Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg, 12-14 juin 1975, Travaux du Centre de Recherche sur le Proche-Orient et la Grèce Antiques, IV (Leyden, n.d.) 62.



if such new names will stick, as they did in the Balkans. Yet it is hard to think that a name like Upper Village, will satisfy the sense of what Greeks call *patris* and Turks *memleket*, a part of its villagers' very identity.

Second, in compiling the new toponymy, the Macka and other registries from Hakkâri north, in fact performed an incidental but invaluable service which has so far been little used by scholars: they recorded thousands of old place-names to be changed which were too insignificant to find their way on to even the Kiepert's maps.

Third, while Hortokop is important enough to figure on the current 1:200,000 map, it could be spared the fate of, say, Irish place-names which the Ordnance Survey fossilised. Local bureaucracy may conceivably restore the living name of Hortokop to its villagers, simply by taking it off the map. Despite the intentions behind it, the process has actually preserved names in the past. Notoriously, river names flow longest. Nevertheless the blatantly Greek Lykos, or Wolf River (itself perhaps an etiological rationalisation of a name older than when it ran through Strabo's birthplace), was successfully diverted into the solidly Turkish-sounding river- and place-name of Kelkit. But it is no good: someone was not told that Kelkit is no more than Gayl Get, the Armenian translation of Wolf River. Even Ephesos has resurfaced by an equally roundabout route to compete with Selçuk (though largely as the brand name of a beer): Turkish Efes, by French Ephèse, out of Latin Ephesus. All these names are quite as 'correct' as the spelling of Birmingham.

University of Birmingham  
Centre for Byzantine Studies  
& Modern Greek

## Dream Interpretation: A Byzantinist Superstition?\*

GEORGE CALOFONOS

The several Byzantine oneirocritic texts have been edited and more recently translated and commented upon,<sup>1</sup> but a study to match Dodds' on Greek antiquity<sup>2</sup> has still to appear.

Preoccupied as they have been with the textual tradition, dating, and form of these texts, those articles which have appeared rarely examine Byzantine oneiromancy within the context of Byzantine culture.<sup>3</sup> Patlagean's use of Achmet's dreambook to unveil Byzantine body-symbolism is in this respect a pioneering and isolated exception to the rule.<sup>4</sup>

The larger compendia on Byzantine literature and civilization generally label dream interpretation a "superstition" and list it together with astrology and other forms of magic as a sort of *curiosité*.

Koukoules, for example, in his ever-useful compilation, discusses oneiromancy among a series of thirty-five different

\* My special thanks to the "Onassis Scholarship Foundation", whose generous support allowed me to carry on research on the subject.

1. S. Oberhelman, *The Oneirocritic Literature of the Late Roman and Byzantine Eras of Greece* . . . (University of Minnesota, Ph.D. thesis, 1981).

2. E.R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951).

3. See e.g., S. Oberhelman, 'Prolegomena to the Byzantine Oneirokritika', *B 50* (1980) 487-503; D. Gigli, 'Gli onirocritici del cod. Paris Suppl. Gr. 690', *Prometheus* 4 (1978) 65-86 and 173-188; D. del Corno, 'Ricerche sull'Onirocritica Greca', *Istituto Lombardo Accademia di Scienze, Lettere, Memorie della Classe di Lettere* 96 (1962) 334-366; etc.

4. E. Patlagean, 'Byzantine Privacy', paper read at the 17th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham 1983. See summary in *Bulletin of British Byzantine Studies* 10 (1984) 22-3.

forms of divination, ranging from astrology to an exotic practice he has chosen to call hippomancy.<sup>5</sup> He is however too eager to stress the fact that there always existed "sensible" people who disapproved of these superstitious practices. 'And if we did not possess . . . evidence (for this) . . .' he remarks ' . . . we would have deduced that our Byzantine ancestors had been throughout the course of the empire exceedingly superstitious'.<sup>6</sup> In order to save his ancestors' face, he produces a long list of "sensible" Byzantines! Here, Basil the great (who disapproved of divination in general) and Georgios Monachos (who believed that effective divination is ■ work of the Devil), are grouped together with Justinian — who in a true imperial tradition put magicians (including dream interpreters) to death. They are accompanied by the Suda (which disapproves of flour-divination and barley divination only: the fact that it was in favor of dreams and omens was ignored by Koukoules), and even the late Roman dream-interpreter Artemidoros himself, who attacked in his *Oneirokritika* some of his rivals. Those are for Koukoules the "rational" Byzantines.

Other authors are less colourful in their discussion of oneiromancy, but their works are more or less dominated by the same assumptions. Bréhier still includes dream interpretation in his chapter on superstition,<sup>7</sup> but is careful to avoid a quest for Byzantine "rationality". Krumbacher quite surprisingly puts oneiromancy under Science in his chapter on Mathematics and Astronomy, but only because it bore for him a resemblance to Astrology together with Prophecy, and other forms of divination.<sup>8</sup> Even Beck finds Oneiromancy unfitting for his categories of Popular Literature, and presents it in his *Epimetron*.<sup>9</sup>

Nowhere is there any attempt in those works to distinguish either between the different forms of divination or — in the case of Koukoules — the different attitudes towards it. If one adopts his superficial distinction between the superstitious and the rational, one imposes on Byzantines a modern post-Renaissance

5. Ph. Koukoules, *Βυζαντινὸν Βίος καὶ πολιτισμός* (Athens 1948-57) I/2, 139-229.

6. *Ibid.*, 126.

7. L. Bréhier, *La Civilisation Byzantine* (Paris 1950) 289-93.

8. K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Literatur* (Munich 1897) I, 627-8.

9. H.-G. Beck, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Volksliteratur* (Munich 1971) 203-4.

notion of rationality, ignoring the fact that the meaning of "superstition" underwent major transformations from antiquity on.

It is true that although the possibility of prophetic dreams was accepted by many philosophical schools in Antiquity (as e.g. Plato and the Neoplatonists, Epicharmos, the Stoics, etc.),<sup>10</sup> Oneiromancy never escaped the characteristic scorn of the educated upper classes towards popular religious and magical beliefs reflected, for example, in pagan historiography after Herodotus, as well as in the work of Cicero and the writings of the Epicureans.

By the second half of the fourth century however, the situation had changed. As Momigliano shows<sup>11</sup> the word "superstition" (*deisidaimonia*, *superstitio*) was now used by Christian writers only to describe paganism. The division between "religion" and "superstition" was transformed into that between Paganism and Christianity. A great deal of popular belief was incorporated into Christianity, as the cult of relics or belief in miracles indicate.

What was the fate of dream interpretation in this context? Was it incorporated within Christian culture, or was it rejected, together with astrology, witchcraft and other pagan practices, as Koukoules' classification implies?

There are good grounds for believing that it was not totally rejected. The Justinianic ban on dream interpreters<sup>12</sup> follows a long imperial Roman tradition of similar legislation against divination. Augustus, Tiberius, and Constantius II all took similar measures<sup>13</sup> which, at least in the case of Constantius, seem to reflect ■ "superstitious fear of magic" rather than any sort of "rational" attitude. Dream interpretation, however, is never included in the list of evil practices drawn up by the Church Councils or those included in other sources such as the Suda and

10. See e.g. Dodds, *op. cit.* (n. 2) 102-34; A.H. Kessels, 'Ancient Systems of Dream Classification', *Mnemosyne* 4/22 (1969) 389-424; and the exhaustive study of R. van Lieshout, *Greeks on Dreams* (Cambridge Ph.D. thesis, 1972).

11. A. Momigliano, 'Popular Religious Beliefs and the Late Roman Historians', *Studies in Church History* 8 (1971) 8.

12. Codex Iustinianus, in *Corpus juris civilis* II, ed. P. Kruger (Berlin 1928) ix, 18.6.

13. See A.A. Barb, 'The Survival of Magic Arts', in A. Momigliano (ed.), *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the 4th Century* (Oxford 1963) 102-3.

Nicephorus Confessor, for example, while Synesios among others openly approved of it.<sup>14</sup>

Prophetic dreams were certainly accepted by Christianity. The Bible is full of them, and they regularly occur in hagiography.

The Christian explanation for prophetic dreams was expressed in the late second and early third centuries by the apologist Tertullian. He believed that they originated either from God, being then honest, prophetic, holy, inspired, and inducing to virtue; or from the devil, normally betraying themselves as vain, deceitful, and impure. He also accepted that some dreams were somehow induced by the soul, while others seemed to originate through a form of ecstasy.<sup>15</sup>

In answering a question on the origin of dreams Anastasios of Sinai in the seventh century followed more or less the same line: he warned his readers that if they trust all dreams, they would be in danger of demonic possession. They should only trust those which come from God, that is to say, those which aimed to make one pious, upright, and inspire a fear of God.<sup>16</sup> It seems that the "demonic-impious" characterization is a step further from the fourth century "superstitious — pagan", reserved in our case for certain dreams only.

Astrology and other forms of divination must always have posed a threat to official ideology. But the need to know what the future held prevailed. Acceptable methods of prognostication, freely available to all, had to be devised. Lachnesterion or bibliomancy — that is, prediction with the aid of the Bible — was one. The first person reported to have practiced this in Byzantium was Heraclius, before setting out on campaign. It was also approved of by Anastasios of Sinai, who justified it as a form of prayer.<sup>17</sup>

Oneiromancy too, with its affinity with God-sent prophetic dreams and incubation in churches, could and did offer an alternative solution.

When the emperor Anastasios and his *parakoimômenos* had alarming dreams, it was a dream-interpreter that explained that

14. Synesios of Cyrene, *De insomniis*, in N. Terzaghi (ed.), *Synesii Cyrenensis Opuscula* (Rome 1944) 143-89.

15. Tertullian, *De anima*, ed. J.H. Waszink (Amsterdam 1947) 65-6.

16. Anastasios of Sinai, *Quaestiones*, MPG 89 (1865) col. 772.

17. *Ibid.* col. 761.

they would both die, punished by God for their ruthlessness, as Malalas<sup>18</sup> and Theophanes<sup>19</sup> assure us. Justinian's prohibition must have been ignored, documented by the fact that Constans II had a personal dream interpreter.<sup>20</sup> With the *Basilika* of Leo the Wise<sup>21</sup> oneiromancy was formally removed from the list of evil practices, while in the *De Ceremoniis* a dreambook is listed among the few books an emperor carried with him on campaign.<sup>22</sup>

This quite outstanding position Byzantine dreambooks acquired mirrors the extensive Christianization of their symbolism,<sup>23</sup> and was supported by their alleged authorship. As the French theorist Michel Foucault has demonstrated, the author's name in such medieval works functioned as an indicator of the status of the work, marking its truthfulness and so conditioning the expectations of the reader.<sup>24</sup> In our case, the status attributed to dreambooks by the supposed author's name seems to have been high, for a number of these names refer to ecclesiastical or religious figures: three patriarchs (Nikephoros, Germanos, Athanasios) and a prophet (Daniel). As far as I am aware, dreambooks are the only form of divination<sup>25</sup> actually attributed to Christian and Old Testament characters.

It is clear that the traditional descriptive approach to Byzantine oneiromancy is rather limiting. Apart from the implied value judgments, it reduces dreambooks merely to a source of secondary information on everyday life, dress, food, and so forth; or to an illustration of Byzantine credulity.<sup>26</sup> In this note I have suggested that dream interpretation acquired a special position in Byzantine culture, quite distinct from other forms of divina-

18. John Malalas, *Chronographia* (CSHB, Bonn 1831) 408-9.

19. Theophanes, *Chronographia* I, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig 1883) 163-4.

20. Theophanes, *ibid.*, 346, and Leo Grammaticus, *Chronographia* (CSHB, Bonn 1842) 137-8.

21. See Photius, *Nomokanon*, in G. Ralles — M. Potles (eds.), *Σύνταγμα τῶν θελῶν καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῶν κανόνων* I (Athens 1852) 192.

22. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Caerimoniis Aulae Byzantinae* (CSHB, Bonn 1829) 467, 8.

23. See e.g. Achmet, *Oneirocriticon*, ed. F. Drexel (Leipzig 1925) 3-4, 10-11, 103-107.

24. M. Foucault, 'What is an Author', in J.V. Harari (ed.), *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (London 1979) 147, 149.

25. With the exception maybe of some books of prophecies.

26. Koukoules, *op. cit.*, passim (n. 5).

tion. Dreambooks thus provide a valuable and greatly under-exploited source of information on Byzantine culture and beliefs. Further study would throw much light on the attitudes and the cultural framework which governed the lives of Byzantines.

*University of Birmingham  
Centre for Byzantine Studies  
and Modern Greek*

## On fifteenth-century CryptoChristianity: A Letter to George Amoiroutzes from Michael Apostolis

ANNA FRANGEDAKI

In this note I wish to draw attention to some hitherto unexploited evidence concerning fifteenth-century CryptoChristianity in a letter addressed to George Amoiroutzes by his friend and relative Michael Apostolis, the platonist and unionist intellectual and copyist.

Amoiroutzes, known to his contemporaries as "the philosopher", was the last protovestiarios of the empire of Trebizond. After the fall of Trebizond (1461) he, together with his two sons (known to us by their Muslim names Iskender and Mehmet) were to be found in the Court of Mehmet II, where Amoiroutzes, one of the many intellectuals in the Sultan's favour, seems to have introduced Mehmet to the wealth of ancient Greek thought.<sup>1</sup>

His two sons rose to high office; Iskender became the Sultan's treasurer and Mehmet translated several Greek geographical and theological treatises for the Sultan.<sup>2</sup>

According to two of the three versions of the sixteenth-century Anonymous Chronicle Amoiroutzes and his sons adopted Islam and renounced Christianity.<sup>3</sup> But as far as Amoiroutzes himself is concerned there is strong evidence to suggest the contrary and

1. Critobuli Imbriotae Libri quinque de rebus gestis Mechemetis, in FHG V (ed. C. Müller [Paris 1870] 54-161) VI, 9.

2. Historia Politica et Patriarchica Constantinopoleos, (ed. Em. Bekker [Bonn 1849]) 47<sup>27</sup>-48<sup>18</sup>, 116<sup>15</sup>-118<sup>3</sup>. Also: Ecthesis Chronica (ed. Sp. Lambros [London 1902]) 35<sup>16</sup>-36<sup>6</sup>.

3. Historia Politica, 38<sup>7-9</sup>; Ecthesis Chronica, 27<sup>3-5</sup>

Turkish sources always refer to him by his Christian name. However, there is no doubt about his sons' conversion to Islam. In his letter to Amoiroutzes, Michael Apostolis gives a quite informative, although initially confusing, description of the events related to their Islamisation.

The letter has been dated by its editor, Noiret, to the end of 1466-1467.<sup>4</sup> In 1466 Apostolis was in Italy and in 1467 on a visit to Skoutari (Albania).<sup>5</sup> Noiret's edition of the letter is not mentioned in the *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*, and it seems that, apart from its editor, only Legrand and Tomadakes used it.

At the very beginning of the letter Apostolis congratulates Amoiroutzes on the way in which he and his sons responded to a crucial question put to them by the Sultan. He praises their decision to choose life rather than death — commenting that Amoiroutzes 'should never have allowed the separation of his body from his soul, as they were joined together in perfect philosophical harmony'. Apostolis' usually obscure written style becomes deliberately cryptic in parts of this letter, as he is knowingly commenting upon matters of immediate interest to the Sultan. According to his letter the question which Mehmet had posed required an answer within two days. An unsatisfactory response would have meant their execution. But they answered well and escaped danger. Their father, who was eventually asked his opinion, stated that he totally approved of his sons' reply.

But what was the Sultan's question? Tomadakes maintained first that Mehmet had set them a philosophical problem, and later that the question was of a theological nature.<sup>6</sup> Both Legrand and Noiret<sup>7</sup> remark that the question might have been simply 'which is the right faith?' It seems probable in fact that the Sultan asked them to admit the superiority of Islam denouncing (once more?) Christianity in public, which they did. If the dating of the letter by Noiret is correct and the events discussed in it con-

4. "Lettres inédites de M. Apostolis" (ed. H. Noiret [Paris 1889]) 46, 83.

5. *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* (ed. E. Trapp [Vienna 1976ff.] 1, lemma 1201.

6. Tomadakes, N.B., "Ετούρκευσεν ὁ Γεώργιος Ἀμιρούτζης", *EEBS* 18 (1948) 99-143.

7. Legrand, E., "George Amiroutzes", in *Bibliographie Hellénique des XV et XVI siècles* (Paris 1903) v. 3, 195-204; Noiret, "Lettres inédites . . .", 46.

temporaneous Mehmet and Iskender had already assumed high positions in the hierarchy of the Ottoman Court, and it was therefore essential that they should please the Sultan. Public acceptance of the superiority of Islam, however, did not necessarily mean that they then totally forgot their Christian origins. On that point Apostolis felt that he should make them aware of this possibility: 'It is very easy for you to pretend that you are following the Turkish (= Muslim) faith, being firm to the previous one (= Christianity). For if this is considered blameworthy by some superstitious people — even though they are the majority — the few who know the reasons should find it not at all blameworthy'.<sup>8</sup> ("Πρὸς δὲ καὶ πάνυ τι εὐχερὲς τευκρίζειν δοκοῦντα τοῖς προτέροις ἐμμένειν · εἰ δὲ τὸ πρᾶγμα τοῖς πολλοῖς διὰ τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν μεμπτέον, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ὀλίγοις διὰ τοὺς λόγους κατηγορίας οὐκ ἄξιον.") We have here clear evidence of Cryptochristian attitudes among the conquered Christian population as early as the second half of the fifteenth century.

As for Amoiroutzes' sons it is uncertain whether they followed Apostolis' suggestion. What leads me to believe that they may have been Cryptochristians is evidence in the *Historia Politica*, where one finds the seemingly contradictory characterization of Mehmet as "a Christian still" during the patriarchate of Maximos (= Manuel Christonymos) in the years 1476-1480.<sup>9</sup> Is this an allusion to Mehmet's Cryptochristianity — or simply to his late Islamization? Without further evidence, the question must remain unanswered.

As far as Iskender, the Great Treasurer, is concerned, his interference in the financial affairs of the Patriarchate which made him unpopular in ecclesiastical circles should be borne in mind. He ordered the confiscation of some Church property and treasure.<sup>10</sup> But it seems that his hostile attitude towards the Church was a response to the Patriarch Nephon's totally ignoring him, while Iskender had expected to be very warmly received.<sup>11</sup>

8. Noiret, "Lettres inédites . . .", 83.

9. *Historia Politica*, 48<sup>9-10</sup>.

10. *Historia Politica*, 59<sup>6-60</sup>; *Historia Patriarchica*, 130<sup>3-135</sup><sup>17</sup>; *Ecthesis Chronica* 46<sup>10-47</sup><sup>9</sup>.

11. *Ecthesis Chronica*, 46,<sup>13-15</sup>

It is worth asking why the Muslim Iskender should have expected special treatment from the leader of the Christian Church. Was he, too, a Cryptochristian?

But it remains a fact that Apostolis suggested in the mid-fifteenth century the practice of Cryptochristianity as an alternative to Islamization by force. Even more interesting is the fact that his letter clearly presents Cryptochristianity as an established — although not yet widely accepted — practice.

Bearing in mind that John Kalekas had encouraged Cryptochristianity as early as in 1338<sup>12</sup> the subject seems to me to want a good deal more attention.

*University of Birmingham  
Centre for Byzantine Studies  
and Modern Greek*

12. See his letter "Εἰς τοὺς ἐδρισκομένους εἰς Νίκαιαν", in *Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitani* (ed. Miklosich — Müller), vi, 183-184; 197-198.

## Critical Studies

### Encountering the Epistemological Challenge or, beyond Humanism: Contemporary Greek Criticism and the Languages of Theory

VASSILIS LAMBROPOULOS

Just as any act of periodization periodizes the person doing the periodizing, so also, categorization politically categorizes the person categorizing. (Ryan 1982: 102)

#### I

It has been a common assumption that the great number of existing Histories of Modern Greek Literature reflects the growing maturity and sophistication of Greek literary studies. Specialists in the field argue that the variety of approaches and perspectives used in these surveys, while establishing a sense of tradition and achievement, has also stimulated both significant research and major reappraisals. If one adds to this scholarly labour the anthologies, the dictionaries, the encyclopaedias, as well as the studies on particular periods and schools, the picture of a thriving critical industry emerges clearly. It is then very difficult to try and reconcile these promising signs with the pervasive scarcity of meta-theoretical work, beginning with the embarrassing absence of a History of Modern Greek Criticism itself. For how can a field develop without introspection? How can a discipline refine its methods or advance its causes without undergoing vigilant self-examination? The lack of theoretical reflexivity on the part of contemporary Greek literary studies gives often the alarming impression that Greek criticism does not even know its history . . .

In this context of apparent epistemological poverty, the subject of the Second [annual] Poetry Symposium organized by the University of Patras, Greek Criticism, came as a pleasant surprise, and its program seemed to encourage many long-overdue



(re)considerations. Unfortunately, judging from the published Proceedings, the Symposium proved to be a major disappointment, and only confirmed the most disturbing fears about the sterile involvement of criticism with Greek literature. (An exception should be made for the informative and insightful papers presented by A. Berlis, M. Lambridis, A. Kitsos-Mylonas, and Nanos Valaoritis, which stand out in a totally alien environment.) Significantly, the least interesting panel had the most promising title, 'Trends and Schools of Greek Criticism in Our Century' (chaired by George Savidis), but provided little more than an incomplete, uninformed, and timid list of names, dates, and clichés, and deserves to be studied as a typical symptom of the intellectual malaise plaguing the field at the present stage of its development.

For the limited purposes of this paper, I intend to concentrate on the final paper presented in that panel, 'Problems of Modern Greek Criticism during the Last Twenty Years', by Giorgis Aristinos. Because of its topic, it was the paper most closely associated with the central concerns of the whole Symposium; in fact, it attempted to stand up to that challenge by charting the territory of contemporary criticism — an aim that it happens to share with this essay, although one may predict that this is going to be their single common element. I shall begin my examination by discussing this paper, and its methodological model in particular.

Aristinos' paper is divided into two parts. In the first, he describes the recent (and still prevailing) conservative critical tradition, and laments its 'improvisatory and asthmatic [sic] character (1983:315). He points to two main characteristics of this tradition, impressionistic writing as a process of false 'identification' (315), and the lack of scientific and philosophical foundations, and he arrives at the vague but interesting conclusion that 'the conditions did not allow for the cultivation of an autonomous and independent thought in Greece' (314). In the second part, the paper takes an optimistic turn as it provides a synoptic survey of more modern trends that have only recently emerged and have the potential to change the overall orientation of criticism. The names attributed here to these trends are: interpretive-explanatory, interpretive-genetic, sociological, psychoanalytical, and semasiological criticism.

Although this taxonomy is offered as a tentative one, it provides some very useful indications about the epistemic problematics of Greek criticism and its ability to advance a relevant metatheory. For example, since we are not told anything about the criteria informing the taxonomy, one wonders if its writer has managed at all to avoid the endemic impressionism that he was criticizing earlier. One also fails to see what is so modern (if not recent . . .) about the trends defined and on which grounds they really break from the established tradition of amateurism. Neither is the recent emergence of these trends accounted for in any manner. Finally, I am far from convinced that a division according to schools of thought and theory, which obeys the methodological principles of the humanistic History of Ideas, is a particularly felicitous way to describe and analyze the critical tendencies and predilections of a specific historical and cultural moment.

It is to his credit that Aristinos made a first attempt to map the contemporary scene of Greek literary studies; but his empirical approach to the question could only yield a general, blurry, non-specific picture which adopts and depicts uncritically the claims on truth and method made by the best-known practitioners. That is why other attempts have to be made toward a truly metacritical understanding of the field: I consider this a task of utmost urgency, if we really want to comprehend the present situation and open new paths for future research. In addition to that, if we want to give to Greek Studies as a whole the credibility and respectability it deserves, we have to synchronize our efforts with the dramatic developments occurring in similar and adjacent fields in the so-called Human and Social Sciences, not in terms of imitation but of dialogic exchange. With this goal in mind, I shall counter-propose an alternative taxonomy of critical discourses in Greek literary studies, based on a research model which has been immensely influential in other areas and comes originally from the history of science: I am referring to T. S. Kuhn's theory of paradigms.

Kuhn based his catastrophic view of scientific revolutions — of radical breaks with tradition in the development of the natural sciences, as one theory is succeeded by another, incommensurable one — on the notion of the 'paradigm'. In his pioneer book, he defined this notion with three descriptions stemming from different perspectives. First, a sociological one: 'universally

recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners' (Kuhn 1970: viii). Second, an analytic one: 'accepted examples of actual scientific practice — examples which include law, theory, application, and instrumentation together — provide models from which spring particular coherent traditions of scientific research' (10). Third, a pragmatic one: 'a set of recurrent and quasi-standard illustrations of various theories in their conceptual, observational, and instrumental applications. These are the community's paradigms, revealed in its textbooks, lectures, and laboratory exercises' (43). Although all three definitions share common elements and seem to describe the same idea, the diverse uses of the term throughout the book gave cause to some misunderstandings and made Kuhn return to the subject in a 'Postscript' appended to the second edition.

In trying to refine his conception, Kuhn provided a clarifying distinction between two different meanings of the term, the one broader than the other. According to the first, a paradigm is 'the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community' (175); the objects of such a constellation of group commitment are constituents of what is usually understood as 'theory' (and what Kuhn calls instead 'disciplinary matrix'), 'and as such they form a whole and function together' (182). According to the second meaning, paradigms are only 'one sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle-solutions' (175) employed as shared examples. Eventually, to avoid further confusion, Kuhn saved the term 'paradigm' for the first meaning of the word only, while giving the term 'exemplar' (187) to the second, the one referring to models of problem solutions.

After these clarifications, it is worth emphasizing that Kuhn's investigation always retains a distinctly hermeneutic character in that it is directed to concrete historical situations and cultural contexts. Kuhn is not interested in individual achievements or particular theories, but in assumptions and methods which affect and determine the operations of communities of scientists: the focus of his persistent attention remains the scientific community, as he investigates the 'community structure of science' (176). His notion of the paradigm as 'what the members of a scientific community share' (176) presupposes the basic premise that 'normal

science and revolutions are, however, community-based activities' (179) — one of truly revisionary implications because it disregards the subject and his inventions in the realm of research and scholarship, and foregrounds the idea of a subject inexorably situated in culture. Yet, Kuhn proceeds to abolish not only the autonomy of the scientist but also the independence of the object of his study, when he asserts boldly: 'A paradigm governs, in the first instance, not a subject matter but rather a group of practitioners. Any study of paradigm-directed or of paradigm-shattering research must begin by locating the responsible group or groups' (180). Thus his negative epistemology dispenses with both the Cartesian observer and the Kantian world which he — always a *man* — was deciphering, in order to concentrate on the irreducibly historical and cultural constitution of knowledge. The 'Postscript' concludes on a resounding Wittgensteinian note: 'Scientific knowledge, like language, is intrinsically the common property of a group or else nothing at all. To understand it we shall need to know the special characteristics of the groups that create and use it' (210).

Throughout his famous book, as well as in later studies which supported and amplified its arguments, Kuhn dealt exclusively with the natural (or what he calls the 'exact') sciences. Although the impact of his work on the philosophy of science was profound, very few attempts have been made to explore the possible applications of his theory for alternative approaches to the history of other disciplines — and these have not gained the author's full approval. The reason behind this reluctance may be sought in both Kuhn's surprisingly cautious (if not timid) explorations of the consequences of his own theory, and in the often misleading way in which other scholars's attempts were conducted. The most characteristic example of this situation can be found in Kuhn's 'Comment' on a discussion of the parallelism between science and art where, not only did he deal obediently, following the panelists' lead, with artistic practices (thus equating unjustifiably craft and discipline, while ignoring criticism altogether), but also admitted that the topics he examined in his own book 'have long been basic for the art historian' (Kuhn 1969: 403), thus drastically narrowing their potential extra-scientific scope to matters of art creation.

I would like to argue that Kuhn's notion of the paradigm can be indeed particularly useful in a historical epistemological/ideological study because it can be brought to draw attention to the production and the uses of knowledge. As his history of science discusses how scientists understand *and* how the right to be a scientist is acquired (or denied, for that matter), likewise one may examine the constitution and the operations of other interpretive communities, like those of the legislators, the theologians, the philosophers, the historians, the philologists, and the critics: an investigation into their assumptions, notions, methods, and procedures could shed new light on their beliefs and researches; on a larger scale, one can also conceive of inquiries into how scientific, religious, historical, philosophical, or literary knowledge and conviction (or even experience) are produced, and what kind of world they constitute for their practitioners and audiences.

But before I outline my experimental application of such an approach to modern Greek criticism, a measure of precaution related to its perspective should, I feel, be taken. The picture of the territory offered by Aristinos in the Patras Symposium on criticism was criticized earlier for its naive and pedantic adherence to the traditional model of categorization according to established and easily recognizable 'schools of thought'. It was this simplistic approach too which further let the writer lapse into crediting the recent, allegedly promising, developments in the field 'not to schools or trends, since our social and intellectual constitution did not allow for their birth, but to certain individuals' (1983:318). Kuhn, of course, has been consistently aware of this pitfall. When he observes, for example, that the 'proponents of different theories are like the members of different language-culture communities' (205), his interesting adaptation of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is momentarily blurred by the use of the word 'theories', which may foster the impression that here the argument is simply about well-defined systems of ideas. In realization of this danger, Kuhn has offered elsewhere the following explanation:

I have never intended to limit the notions of paradigm and revolution 'to major theories'. [ ] More important, paradigms are not to be entirely equated with theories. Most fundamentally, they are accepted concrete examples of scientific achievement, actual problem solutions which scientists study with care and upon which they model their own work (Kuhn 1969: 412).

As we saw, Kuhn later gave the name 'exemplar' to this second meaning of the term 'paradigm'. I shall return, therefore, to the first one, and in the rest of this paper I shall understand this term as denoting the system of beliefs and ideas that a particular interpretive community shares and bases its research on. I shall now try to sketch a different map of the field of contemporary Greek criticism by describing what I perceive as the dominant paradigms and the respective communities of specialists whose knowledge they express *and* constitute. Three points should remain clear throughout this description: first, that communities are not identical with either critical 'schools' or any disciplines; second, that paradigms are not identical with trends of thought or literary theories; and third, that both communities and paradigms are historical/epistemological and social/intersubjective concepts, and therefore group together assumptions and methods (the second) and practices (the first), not institutions of individuals (who may in fact produce different types of work which belong to different categories).

## II

The first paradigm I shall call *lyrical impressionism*. Its basic assumptions stem from romantic aesthetics in what is perhaps its most popular — populist? — version. The artwork is a beautiful object of an autonomous quality, which is made to last forever and be admired by all ages. It is the creation of a talented and unique genius and reveals, by incarnating the inspired visions of his imagination, something valuable about the essence of the world and the meaning of life. But the heights and the abyss of a poet's mind are not readily accessible to everybody: for their terrible truth to be communicated to the majority of the people, the intervention of another mind, properly attuned to the music of higher spheres, is necessary. Only another artist, it is believed, or at least an artistically inclined person, can truly comprehend the messages encapsulated in an artwork and help the audience listen to them receptively.

The community of the interpreters who share these aesthetic assumptions consists primarily of authors who feel they are naturally qualified to translate for the large public the masterpieces of literature, the artistic ciphers of the centuries. Their attitude is programmatically anti-scientific because they see great

art as a sacred mystery which remains beyond the reach of disciplined intellect or method. They usually publish in literary magazines and employ the essay to communicate their ideas, since it is the least restraining (and least demanding) genre of expository writing. Their style, quasi-poetic and often unashamedly emotional, or even confessional in tone, dramatizes the encounter of an artistic sensibility with an artwork, the expression of an artist's talent. Although these encounters take widely different forms, we may deduce a general methodological path which most of these personal adventures in the library take: in three stages, it leads from the reading of the work and the first emotional response to it, through a meditation on the life and the (usually tormented) intentions of its author, to some generalizing speculations about the meaning of life and the instructive guidance provided by the work to our agonizing search for it.

Lyrical impressionism registers impressions and personal spontaneous reactions in a poetic vein and a markedly subjective mood of introspection. Its discussions focus on matters of content, of thematic and psychological meaning, which is revealed when the beautiful covers of form are removed. Correspondingly, the criteria for evaluation are essentially moral, or rather moralistic, because the ultimate judgement of the work measures the validity of its content for one's life and conduct according to some basic humanistic principles. Thus, what the attentive sensibility of the gifted reader produces out of its intuitive understanding of literature is a system of rules for moral behaviour — a morality which may be conservative or aestheticist but still always thinks and judges in terms of 'good' and 'bad'.

The second paradigm I shall call *political realism*. Its assumptions stem from the aesthetics of traditional Marxism or liberalism. Here the talents and the privileged status of the author are not the centre of direct critical attention: his work is treated not only as a gift to the world but primarily as the artistic actualization of particular historical forces and social trends. It is seen, therefore, less as a source of light — the inner light of the poetic mind as conceived by lyrical impressionism — and more as a mirror reflecting phenomena and events from reality. Genius is neither self-sufficient nor independent any longer: it is not self-sufficient because it does not work with its inspiration and other intrinsic resources only, but needs the material provided by the

outer world; and it is not independent because a certain transfiguration of external conditions and circumstances is needed for the creation of the artwork. Thus, while lyrical impressionism concentrates on the interplay between mind and ideas or images, political realism concentrates on the interplay between consciousness and the world — society, history, and culture.

The community of the interpreters who share these aesthetic assumptions consists mainly of well-read critics/reviewers who are explicitly committed to 'progressive' political causes. They consider it their duty and mission to enlighten their audience — and of course reach the largest one possible — about the correspondences between the super-structure of art and the base-structure that simultaneously conditions and is reflected in it. For this reason, they publish in newspapers, weeklies, and literary magazines, employing the article, the most accessible and digestible genre of expository writing, and cultivate a self-consciously 'easy' and attractive style, dealing in a rather self-effacing manner with artworks in the context of social phenomena. What they try to project is conviction, not personality, and they appeal to rational, rather than emotional, faculties.

Because of its ideological inclinations, this attitude is in principle quite pro-scientific, and some of its followers have even advocated the application of scientific methods to literary criticism itself; but the rules of such methods have yet to be formulated . . . In the meantime, the methodological path dictated by this paradigm starts with the work itself and the world it portrays, and moves, through an examination of the historical conditions which contributed to its creation, to a broader social criticism and an (explicit or implicit) call for political vigilance and reform.

Political realism is by design a commentary on older or modern social reality, which tries to serve the causes of those oppressed by the economic and other forces of exploitation in power. Ultimately, it seeks to advance political awareness, if not activism, through the 'correct' appreciation of literature, which is itself considered as one of the most important instruments of liberation. Discussions focus not on the content of the work but on its message — not on what it says but on what it is talking about; not on its moral meaning but on its political significance (positive or negative). Obviously, in both cases literature draws its supreme justification from outside realms and principles extrinsic to it,

moral and political respectively: the first pertain more to the individual's improvement, the latter to the amelioration of social conditions (— although this is a heuristic distinction which only for reasons of temporary convenience does it assume here that the line separating the two is not a thin, if not artificial one). For both paradigms, literature serves educational purposes; but in the case of political realism, these purposes must have an immediate validity — they must be historically sound and politically effective too.

The last paradigm, which I shall call *symbolist formalism*, is informed by assumptions that acquired currency with the French Symbolism and the English Aestheticism of the late 19th century. Here the artwork is separated completely from its creator and social environment, and is viewed as an autonomous, self-regulating structure and characterized by a number of definable inherent features. The aesthetic functions of these features determine the artistically unique quality of each work, and they are perceived and known under the comprehensive name of 'form'. Form is not what the work is about — the author's intentions or the surrounding social reality — but how the work appears and exists; the historical conditions and the authorial involvement in the act of creation appear irrelevant: only the work itself, the beautiful and perfect text, matters. Accordingly, its analysis should dispense with all extrinsic information (such as biographical, psychological, historical, sociological) and concentrate on the immanent evidence, the linguistic construction of the work. Even though the talented author is duly credited with its creation, and the importance of the circumstances underwriting it is recognized, it is the internal, self-sufficient economy of the text that is laboriously explicated in order to let its beauty shine in purity.

The community of the interpreters who share these assumptions consists primarily of academics, who feel that they have been properly trained, and therefore qualify by specialization, to analyze the work and help the general public appreciate the artistries of beauty better. Their attitude is professionally pro-scientific, and their role totally subservient: they put themselves humbly to the service of the text and, in an effort to renew the scholarly claims of traditional philology and reaffirm the authority of the literary canon, they describe in painstaking detail the

intricacies of aesthetic structures. They usually publish in literary magazines and academic journals, and conform with the standard requirements of the scholarly paper in order to express their ideas, since its rigorous form facilitates an impersonal style that seems to promote only the object of research. The methodological path they follow moves from a careful and exhaustive examination of the text to an interpretation and evaluation of its formal features, and possibly to a conclusion that places it in the context of the writer's *oeuvre*, the literature of the period, the evolution of a genre, etc.

Symbolist formalism as a paradigm provides the model for a criticism at its most systematic — philology with the aspirations of an exact science. It is also criticism at its most modest: without seeking to improve the moral or political consciousness of the public, it simply helps it appreciate and enjoy art as such more fully. That is why it concentrates on form, on what appears to be the immediate, tangible, almost quantifiable aspect of art, seeking literature's justification in beauty (that is, form perfect), and not in external factors. In this way, philology seems to return to its own disciplinary origins — the illumination and propagation of what is best in (western) civilization.

Symbolist formalism is the self-sustained criticism of a self-sustained art. As a phenomenological position, it draws its methodological principles and vocabulary from the early Russian Formalism (early 1920s) and the orthodox French Structuralism (early 1960s). But it finds itself in a peculiar position: because there has been no Modernism proper in Greek letters — with certain works by Dorros, Papatsonis, Cavafy, Embirikos, Sarandaris, Pentzikis, Xefloudas, Axioti, Beratis, and a few others proving, as exceptions, the general rule — but rather a late Symbolism in free verse or introspective prose (and Surrealist guise), and because the Greek literary (and not only literary . . .) language has undergone no crisis of means or confidence, this paradigm has found it impossible to develop in a way parallel to that which its foreign models followed in their later years, and instead continues observing standards borrowed from the movements of Symbolism and Aestheticism. This has additionally prevented it from even reaching the levels of purism achieved by other formalisms, and usually allows for the mastermind of the author to reappear close to the end of the paper and claim back its outcome.



These are then the three prevailing paradigms in the scene of Greek literary studies *in Greece* today. (I have deliberately limited myself to the Greek scene in order to keep a critical distance from the field in which my own work is situated; if one was to include in the general picture the communities of practitioners working abroad, certain adjustments should be made in the descriptions of the operating paradigms.) The proposed scheme distinguishes three different critical paradigms which incorporate various modes of reading and established practices of interpretation and evaluation affecting not only the reception of current literature but also its future course. In the preceding pages, I have tried to define their distinctive characteristics and delineate the contours of their functions. What this analysis has produced, though, is not only a list of differentiating features but also a group of remarkable similarities between the paradigms — a set of assumptions tacitly shared by all three to a degree that allows for the emergence of a surprising unity and unanimity among the specialists in the field. These basic assumptions are the following:

1. The transparency of language. Words may have one or multiple meanings but meanings correspond to real things or phenomena: through language, a world is perceived and its reality apprehended. Language is a medium of expression and communication, an unproblematic carrier of signification, and literature is its maximum, most effective and powerful use.
2. The full presence of the text. The specialist in literature deals with a written page of high artistic quality. Its presence in his conscience is clear, immediate, and unmediated: the text is always there — available, readable, repeatable in its unique integrity; the reader with the appropriate talent and education who tries hard can have direct access to its meaning.
3. The genius of the author. The writer is the ultimate source of literature: he is the gifted man who becomes a master of the artistic means and creates verbal art. The work is his inimitable creation and he takes full credit for the success of his efforts.
4. The authority of the critic. While the writer authors, the critic authorizes; he is the well-trained specialist who can elucidate the difficulties of the text, reveal its secrets to everybody, and assess its qualities. His role is to mediate between the creator and his audience, and facilitate a responsive response to art.
5. The irrelevance of gender. Like literature, criticism is a male

occupation; in its domain, men write about the works of men: it is a men's world. Not that there are no proficient women practitioners in the field; but to the extent that they become such, the difference of their sex is obliterated. In fact, gender distinctions do not seem to matter at all in literary studies since critics, although men, assume that they write like Men, that is, people.

6. The supremacy of the canon. Critics interpret and evaluate texts of artistic merit. New works are read against the established canon, the repository of literary masterpieces we are all familiar with through anthologies or textbooks. Works of the highest quality will eventually be incorporated in the canon and become part of a great cultural tradition.

These extensive similarities among the three paradigms, these very fundamental assumptions shared by all, are not enumerated here in order to blur the distinctions between them recorded earlier. The distinctions are important and should be kept in mind because they enable us to notice the differences in the constitution, the interests, the methods, and the practices of these paradigms. The similarities, on the other hand, point to a deeper epistemological connection which brings them together into the same epistemic formation. They indicate specifically that all three work and evolve as off-springs of a tradition which still appears powerful, and in the particular field of Modern Greek Studies is apparently the dominant one: Romantic Humanism. I am referring, of course, to the tradition that emerged after the breakdown of Neo-Classicism, the Age of Reason, and by giving birth to Idealism, Romanticism, Hellenism, and Philology created the Age of Man.

I am afraid that, before we have a comprehensive History of Greek Criticism, or at least some in-depth studies of its major phenomena, it is not possible to venture a systematic theory about the development of the humanistic tradition in this realm. (What makes the matter even more complicated is the very unfortunate fact that, after the victory of the Demoticist movement over Purism in the early 20th century, that is, after the Ancients lost the battle of domination over the past to the Moderns, the discourses of the 18th- and 19th-century criticism have been massively suppressed along with their almost extinct linguistic idiom.) But we may at least look at the contemporary scene, observe the cluster of forces operating there, and pose some hard



questions: why has the number of critics been decreasing in the last several years? why is there as yet no Greek scholarly journal devoted exclusively to literary studies? why is there no association of specialists? why are scholars not publishing in foreign journals and their research receives little attention abroad? why is there no theory included in most academic curricula? why are there so few studies reflecting on the field itself? why is there no interest whatsoever in aesthetics? why have the Ancient and Byzantine theories of art been totally forgotten? why, finally, this extreme alienation from theoretical and methodological developments in the west throughout our century, and especially in the last twenty years, after the advent of post-structuralism?

These questions obviously require an extensive and comprehensive treatment which would exceed the scope of my investigation; they would also require a forum which, ten years after the inception of *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* and almost twenty years after the inception of the Modern Greek Studies Association of America, *may* be still sadly missing; and yet it *may* not be, as encouraging developments (such as the rejuvenation of *BMGS*, the launching of the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, and the first appearance of similar publications) have recently indicated. This paper has not dealt with specific institutional practices as much as with ideological assumptions. And it is on the level of assumptions and presuppositions that it might have some constructive suggestions to offer. These will be therefore related to the theoretical and scholarly orientation of the field and will indicate potential ways in which it can reorganize, open, expand, and refine its methodologies. Having based my description of the field on Kuhn's theory of paradigms, I will derive my suggestions from one of the most astute readers of Kuhn's treatise, Paul Feyerabend, and more specifically from the defence of epistemological anarchism which he presented in his seminal *Against Method* and further elaborated in his collection *Science in a Free Society*. I shall first summarize Feyerabend's theory of counterinduction and then focus on those major arguments which I see as pertaining to the present situation of Modern Greek Studies.

### III

The starting point of Feyerabend's argument is a basic premise

that is unlikely to cause much disagreement: '*I regard every action and every piece of research both as a potential instance of the application of rules and as a test case*'; this means that 'we may permit a rule to guide our research', as we usually do in our routine work, at the unavoidable expense of some unexplored possibilities; 'but we may also permit our research and our activities to suspend the rule' (Feyerabend 1978: 165), and decide to test an alternative approach (despite its lack of credibility) and check the validity of the established rule. Feyerabend argues that the second procedure is the one truly beneficial for the advancement of science because it means 'tracing the consequences of "counter-rules" which oppose some familiar rules of the scientific enterprise' (Feyerabend 1975: 29). Counterinduction, the use of a radically different approach in order to see what happens to the established one (and perhaps to the whole practice), proposes an incompatible alternative to the accepted rule or theory, and thus tests its validity and limits. 'Both the relevance and the refuting character of decisive facts can be established only with the help of other theories which [ ] are not in agreement with the view to be tested' (1975: 41). This, from an orthodox, conventional perspective, is necessarily an act of transgression: '*the validity, usefulness, adequacy of popular standards can be tested only by research that violates them*' (1978: 35)

Feyerabend reminds us that the disciplinary constraints of our training and scholarly practices usually impose an one-dimensional perspective on our understanding, with the result that discussions and exchanges commonly concentrate on the nature of the evidence at hand, and find it very difficult to acquire or even tolerate a reflexive attitude toward first premises and principles. In order to advance our research, he insists, we have to question what we do.

Therefore, the first step in our criticism of customary concepts and customary reactions is to step outside the circle and either to invent a new conceptual system, for example, a new theory, that clashes with the most carefully established observational results and confounds the most plausible theoretical principles, or to import such a system from outside science, from religion, from mythology, from the ideas of incompetents, or the ramblings of madmen. This step is, again, counterinductive. Counterinduction is thus both a *fact* — science would not exist without it — and a legitimate and much needed *move* in the game of science (1975: 68).

The outcome of such an epistemological disposition and methodological openness is of course the demise of such traditional beliefs as the ideas of objectivity, progress, and independence in science: the barriers between the disciplines, between the specialist and the layman, the object and its observer, or the fact and the fable, break down to clear a field of unlimited and infinite possibilities, as science becomes accountable to society, not to Truth:

Knowledge so conceived is not a series of self-consistent theories that converges towards an ideal view; it is not a gradual approach to the truth. It is rather an ever increasing *ocean of mutually incompatible (and perhaps even incommensurable) alternatives*, each single theory, each fairy tale, each myth that is part of the collection forcing the others into greater articulation and all of them contributing, via this process of competition, to the development of our consciousness. Nothing is ever settled, no view can ever be omitted from a comprehensive account (1975: 30).

These comments on the numerous and endless paths of possible research bring us, with their scandalous egalitarianism, to Feyerabend's most controversial (non-) doctrine: in his own words 'there is only *one* principle that can be defended under *all* circumstances and in *all* stages of human development. It is the principle: *anything goes*' (1975: 28). Before reacting with revulsion to its inflammatory rhetoric, though, we must remember that this is an epistemological principle, not an (im)moral dogma. A milder phrasing might probably render its thrust less harmful: 'All methodologies have their limitations and the only "rule" that survives is "anything goes"' (1975: 296). This clearly means that there is one (absolute) rule — that there are no (absolute) rules. Although any involvement in scholarship and science explicitly presupposes and demands that we follow (and abide by) systems of rules, it is worth remembering that their value is heuristic and far from permanent or inviolable. 'No system of rules and standards is ever safe and the scientist who proceeds into the unknown may violate any system, however "rational". This is the polemical meaning of the phrase "anything goes"' (1978: 165).

Feyerabend's position has been repeatedly dismissed as extreme scepticism or nihilism by people who are unwilling to read it in the context of his critique of scientific realism. What is principally foregrounded in his view of the scientific enterprise is the decisively historical character of the evidence:

Methodological rules speak of 'theories', 'observations' and 'experimental results' as if these were clear-cut well-defined objects whose properties are easy to evaluate and which are understood in the same way by all scientists. However, the material which a scientist *actually* has at his disposal, his laws, his experimental results, his mathematical techniques, his epistemological prejudices, his attitude towards the absurd consequences of the theories which he accepts, is indeterminate in many ways, ambiguous, *and never fully separated from the historical background*. This material is always contaminated by principles which he does not know and which, if known, would be extremely hard to test (1975: 66).

Many scientists reluctantly agree that the paradigm under which their community works and their discipline operates necessarily limits the calibre of their research. What most members of a community find detrimental to admit, though, is that the evidence itself they are dealing with — materials, facts, phenomena, events — is determined too by their main hypotheses about man and his world, and that, therefore, knowledge is ineluctably marked by its historical character.

While in the convenient isolation of the laboratory, the library, the classroom, and the conference hall we tend to aspire toward progress and a fully-accomplished encounter with the essence of things, thus transcending the surrounding and all-encompassing and situating horizon of cultural reality, Feyerabend reminds us that 'there are changes which are not results of a causal interaction between object and observer but of a change of the very conditions that permit us to speak of objects, situations, events' (1978: 70). And the argument about the historical nature of the evidence leads, in turn, to a more pragmatic understanding of the function of the rules as the regular operation of conventional norms of scholarly activity and scientific behaviour in a particular institutional and cultural context. Feyerabend's relativism is inspired by an elegant insight derived from the history of science:

Standards are intellectual measuring instruments; they give us readings not of temperature, or of weight, but of the properties of complex sections of the historical process. [ ] We cannot specify standards before we know the subject matter the standards are supposed to judge. Standards are not eternal arbiters of research, morality, beauty preserved and presented by an assembly of high priests that is protected from the irrationality of the common ramble in science, the arts, in society; they are instruments provided for certain purposes by those who are familiar with the circumstances and who have examined them in detail (1978: 37, 38).

It seems that we have touched now on another thorny issue, that of relativism, and some additional explanation is needed to account for the standpoint of epistemological anarchism on the courses available to (or advisable for) scientific research. Feyerabend has already warned about the possible reactions of the caretakers of every orthodoxy: 'Relativism is often attacked not because one has found a fault, but because one is afraid of it' (1978: 79). More specifically:

For the great majority — and that includes Christians, rationalists, liberals and a good many Marxists — there exists only one truth and it must prevail. Tolerance does not mean acceptance of falsehood side by side with truth, it means human treatment of those unfortunately caught in falsehood (1978: 80).

(Incidentally, one may recall here Michel Foucault's investigations into the therapeutic treatment of such sinners as the heretics, the madmen, the prisoners, and the perverts by those safeguarding the dogmas of truth in other ages.)

Feyerabend has clarified his own position by drawing a sharp distinction between philosophical and political relativism: '*Philosophical relativism* is the doctrine that all traditions, theories, ideas are equally true or equally false or, in an even more radical formulation, that any distribution of truth values over traditions is acceptable' (1978: 83). This is the argument of ahistorical, extreme scepticism whose defeatist idealism Feyerabend (following Wittgenstein) rejects. '*Political relativism*', on the other hand, 'affirms that all traditions have equal rights' (1978: 82) and is interested not in ascertaining the validity of beliefs and theories but in defending their legitimacy and creating space for their free cultivation; it asserts that all judgements are relational and depend on an underlying tradition which sustains their claims to truth: their currency hinges on the status and the power of that tradition, and is far from permanent or absolute. This radical historization of science pushed Kuhn's theory of paradigms to its logical limits and to the political conclusion of epistemological anarchism: Feyerabend advocates an open and free exchange between traditions and theories, beyond the rules of institutionalized rationality that are commonly known as scholarly standards.

Some of my more liberal readers may find themselves sympathetically inclined toward the idea of an unrestrained exchange between scientific traditions, but they may still worry about the dangers of an uncontrolled proliferation of interpretations. Let me conclude, then, this discussion by explaining that Feyerabend has not provided a defence of proliferation (much as he is in its favour), but has rather showed that no rational argumentation or disciplinary demarcation can exclude it, because plurality is constitutively embedded in scientific practices. 'Proliferation does not mean that people can't have well defined and even dogmatic views, it means that research consists in playing views off against each other rather than in pursuing a single view to the bitter end' (1978: 147-48). This makes for a particularly significant position in that it does not advocate an Other of science, something that is very important but outside its realm and should be therefore incorporated in it — it does not call for science's improvement but rather points to the fact that the games of proliferation play a fundamental role in it, a role which has been suppressed in the name of balance, unity, and homogeneity. A truly deconstructive investigation in its own unique fashion, Feyerabend's theory belongs to the best achievements of contemporary negative hermeneutics with its meticulous insistence on the historical constitution of all knowledge.

We have to conclude then, that *even within* science reason cannot and should not be allowed to be comprehensive and that it must often be overruled, or eliminated, in favour of other agencies. There is not a single rule that remains valid under all circumstances and not a single agency to which appeal can always be made (1975: 179-80).

After the discussion on relativism, we can now understand better why this is not a philosophical idea but a historical observation which entails a political stance. '*Given* science, reason cannot be universal and unreason cannot be excluded' (1975: 180). Even the position of epistemological anarchism, Feyerabend implies, is a culturally situated one which makes sense only '*given* science', that is, in the context of the western tradition and from the viewpoint of our post-industrial, post-modernist, post-structuralist age. He defends the legitimacy, not the validity, of unreason, which is the other side, rather than the antithesis, of reason — its supplement, its indispensable and inalienable negative. When he asserts boldly: 'Without "chaos", no

knowledge' (1975: 179), the quotation marks signify that by 'chaos' is meant only what modern science has suppressed as unreason, what it has ostracized as unscientific, what it has banned as false — is own constitutive otherness that could be used to question the logic of identity and the metaphysics of reason. Feyerabend's ultimate purpose is a political one which orients his critique against the normative operations of institutionalized and consecrated ideology:

I want to defend society and its inhabitants from all ideologies, science included. All ideologies must be seen in perspective. One must not take them too seriously. One must read them like fairytales which have lots of interesting things to say but which also contain wicked lies, or like ethical prescriptions which may be useful rules of thumb but which are deadly when followed to the letter (1981: 156).

Once again, he is not envisioning idealistically the abolition of ideologies, only suggesting polemically that we learn how to resist their totalitarian grip: his is a determined propaedeutic for resistance against all impositions of knowledge-as-truth.

Feyerabend, like Kuhn, has dealt with the natural or exact sciences, and has drawn his examples mainly from the history of astronomy. But I believe that his negative epistemology, and his critique of the 'chauvinism of science' and the artificial distinction between context of discovery and context of justification in particular, as well as his emphasis on the historico-cultural character of the evidence and the cosmological assumptions supporting every method, may help the reorientation of Greek literary studies and facilitate the introduction *and* integration of theoretical considerations into its practices. While reason and application, theory and practice, remain distinguishable from each other, the conventions of romantic humanism will prevail; but if we are willing to admit that the contemporary critiques of scientific reason (which is arguably of the same age as the discourses of the Humanities) pertain to the philological and critical practices as well, *at least* to the extent that the ideal of an exact science has had a pervasive effect on the literary disciplines, we may then start suspecting that both Art and Science (and perhaps even Nature itself) as areas of study, knowledge, and experience belong exclusively to the Modern Age of the last three centuries, the Age

of Man, whose demise we have been witnessing for the last forty years. The study of Greek literature in Greece and abroad during this century has been following an empirical path from idealism (which says that reason governs research) to naturalism (which says that research determines reason) [see Feyerabend 1978: 24-25, 31-33], and therefore it has been developing a growing interest in (and concern about) its scholarly status which is expressed mostly in a positivistic quest for the most accurate and scientific method. Counterinduction as an alternative investigative procedure could expose the vanity of this enterprise, already felt in western scholarship, and help the proliferation of paradigms, while at the same time integrating theory into practice and establishing a comprehensive (and yet de-centred and ec-centric) theoretical practice (or practical theory) of Modern Greek Studies in general. In one very pragmatic sense, it is not a question of better method but of more (and more) methods, of a freer exchange between paradigms.

Above all, the cultivation of counterinduction, the advocacy of the contemporary languages of theory, and the defence of proliferation, which have been the preoccupation of this paper, seem to me to provide for the most adequate and courageous response of the study of Greek literature to the decisive (and unavoidable) epistemological challenge of our post-modern episteme against romantic humanism.

Postmodern science — by concerning itself with such things as undecidables, the limits of precise control, conflicts characterized by incomplete information, '*fracta*', catastrophes, and pragmatic paradoxes — is theorizing its own evolution as discontinuous, catastrophic, nonrectifiable, and paradoxical. It is changing the meaning of the word *knowledge*, while expressing how such a change can take place. It is producing not the known, but the unknown. And it suggests a model of legitimation that has nothing to do with maximized performance, but has as its basis difference understood as paralogy (Lyotard 1984: 60).

If we do not want to isolate the field of Greek studies from others, if we do not want to inhibit its development, and if we do not want to privilege our work with intellectual superiority and set it apart from the labours of society, it appears that we must soon face the combined tasks of epistemological reflexivity, historical awareness, and political responsibility. It is somehow unfortunate,



then, that I shall have to conclude with a crucial question that has yet to be answered, and not on a more optimistic note: if the emergence of theory is always a sign of a (healthy) crisis threatening the foundations of orthodoxy, and if the recent upheavals in the paradigms of the 'human sciences' reflect such a positive development, can the traditionalist disciplines of philology and criticism (and by extension history, folklore, linguistics, and philosophy) which, like their subject, Greek literature (and culture), have never experienced a crisis of conscience, can they possibly understand theory and allow for its unsettling inquisitions?

What is at stake, then, is a politics of multiple centres and plural strategies, less geared toward the restoration of a supposedly ideal situation held to be intact and good than to the micrological fine-tuning of questions of institutional power, work and reward distribution, sexual political dynamics, resource allocation, domination, and a broad range of problems whose solutions would be situationally and participationally defined (Ryan 1982: 116).

Ohio State University

#### References

- Aristinos, Giorgis (1983). 'Provlimate Neoellinikis Kritikis kata tin Teleftea Ikosaetia', in Sokratis L. Skartsis, ed.: *Practica Defterou Symposiou Piisis* (Athens).
- Feyerabend, Paul (1975). *Against Method. Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge* (London 1977).
- (1978). *Science in a Free Society* (London).
- (1981). 'How to Defend Society against Science' [1975], in Ian Hacking, ed.: *Scientific Revolutions* (Oxford).
- Kuhn, T.S. (1969). 'Comment', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2:4, 403-12 (1970). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* [1962], 2nd ed. (Chicago, Ill.).
- Lyotard, Jean-François (1984). *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* [1979], trans. Geoff Bennington — Brian Massumi (Minneapolis).
- Ryan, Michael (1982). *Marxism and Deconstruction. A Critical Articulation* (Baltimore).

